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HDN



*J. Miranda*  
THE

# HISTORY

OF

DON FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA'S

ATTEMPT TO EFFECT A

## REVOLUTION

IN

SOUTH AMERICA,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

— — — — —  
BY A GENTLEMAN WHO WAS AN OFFICER UNDER THAT  
GENERAL, TO HIS FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES.  
— — — — —

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

SKETCHES OF THE

*LIFE OF MIRANDA,*

AND GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF

CARACCAS.

— — — — —  
Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot  
Unlikely wonders.

SHAK.

---

BOSTON:

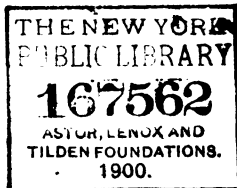
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**DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS—To wit.**

**BE IT REMEMBERED**, that on the seventh day of October, in the thirty second year of the Independence of the United States of America, **OLIVER & MUNROE**, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the Title of a Book, the Right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following—to wit :

“The History of Don Francisco De Miranda’s attempt to effect a Revolution in South America, in a Series of Letters. By a gentleman who was an officer under that general, to his friend in the United States. To which are annexed, sketches of the Life of Miranda, and geographical notices of Caraccas.

Thoughts tending to ambition; they do plot  
Unlikely wonders.

SHAW.”

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**WILLIAM S. SHAW,**  
*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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## PREFACE.

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*THE letters in this volume give an account of the commencement, progress and termination of Miranda's attempt to effect a revolution in South America. The facts came within the observation of the writer, or were obtained by careful enquiry. In history, says a great moralist and critick, the whole should be told. The author has told all that appeared to him at once proper to be related and interesting to the reader. These letters were written for the information of the author's friends and to assist his own memory. After much deliberation and some doubt, he has been induced to commit them to the press. The expedition of Miranda excited attention and expectation at the time and has not ceased to be a subject of speculation. It*

*had a certain aspect upon our foreign relations; and occasioned a discussion of much delicacy respecting the conduct of the American government. It may be of some use to the world, that the agency of Miranda in this enterprise should be detailed and the impression he made on the minds of his unfortunate followers should be known. By the disclosure of the facts, the persons concerned with him may hope to be considered with more equity and perhaps more favour, than they would find, if the publick opinion were left to be formed by the fictions of rumour and the exaggerations of ignorance. It is possible that its developement will create an interest in behalf of that portion of Miranda's associates, now suffering imprisonment\* or slavery in that country, where they dreamed they should enjoy and communicate liberty. This enterprise and its incidents afford a curious exhibition of human nature. The boldness of the*

---

\* See an account of their situation in I. H. Sherman's pamphlet printed in New-York by McFarlane and Long.

## PREFACE.

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*design and the variations of fortune in its progress and execution ; the sufferings and the actions of the adventurers are not wholly unworthy of the attention of those, who wish to be instructed by a view of the obliquities of the human mind or amused by the perusal of eccentric adventures.*





# MIRANDA'S EXPEDITION.

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## LETTER I.

*Commencement of the expedition.—Ship and commander.—Author's views and expectations in joining Miranda.—Supposed destination.—Reasons for believing the enterprise sanctioned by the government of the United States.*

*Ship Leander, at Sea, Feb. 5th, 1806.*

*Dear Friend,*

PUBLICK rumour has probably given you some information of a mysterious expedition, said to be fitting out at New-York, under the auspices of a celebrated character. I have been persuaded by my friend Mr. \*\*\*\*\* to commit myself to the chances of an enterprise, at once extraordinary and dangerous ; and to leave my own country once more, in hope of honour and it's reward. You may perhaps fear that I have been seduced by the glitter of fair promises, or the allurements of novelty ; or prompted by a spirit of adventure to speculate too largely.

B

on the favours of fortune. It may be so ; but I have deliberated much on the subject, and think I am justified in the resolution I have taken. I confess, however, that in forming it, the opinion of men, whose fortunes and characters are staked on the issue, had great authority.

My new situation will no doubt furnish a variety of subjects and events for a correspondence, which I shall not neglect, because you have a claim to this attention ; and it will be no small consolation to keep you thus alive in memory during my absence. I propose to address to you an account of all the interesting occurrences that may happen in this expedition, remaining silent only when it shall be enjoined by an honorable obligation, and choosing such a time for sending my letters as prudence and regard to my duty shall point out. We have been out three days, the wind blowing hard all the time, till within two hours. I begin my epistolary journal by informing you that the *Leander* is a ship of about two hundred tons burden, commanded by capt. Thomas Lewis, who is reputed to be a man of intrepidity, and a thorough master of his profession. He is said to have proved his spirit and bravery on occasions, which put them

to the test; and his appearance and deportment are, in my estimation, strong indications of his possessing the character which report, and his own actions have established. From the little I have seen, I have no doubt of his seamanship; for I notice he manages the vessel with skill and ease; and the ocean seems to be his element. There are nearly two hundred souls on board, so that as you may conceive, we are very much crowded, and on that account, but ill accommodated.

You naturally inquire what is the object and destination of this ship? what do we propose and whither are we going? I am unable to give a positive answer to either of these questions; for only a few confidential persons concerned are let into the secret; nor do I know the extent of that knowledge relating to it, that possibly might be obtained, were I to make it my business to importune for particular information. I deem it proper at this moment, to suffer my curiosity to remain unsatisfied till the period arrives when inquiry will not be considered impertinent, or an exposure of our plans and intentions impolitic. This, I apprehend, will shortly be the case. I for one, and most others, have embarked upon

general information and assurances that more shall be disclosed at a suitable season. We rely much on our leader and on those who recommended him to our confidence. We know enough not to be angry with ourselves for joining the undertaking ; we imagine and conjecture much. Generally, I can say that we are engaged in an expedition to some part of the Spanish dominions, probably in South America, with a view to assist the inhabitants in throwing off the oppressive yoke of the parent country ; and establishing a government for themselves, upon which we are told by our general they have resolved ; and for which he says they are entirely disposed and prepared. For this purpose the Leander was engaged and fitted out, as we understand, by the credit and funds of Don Francisco de Miranda, the commander in chief of the expedition. The vessel is laden with arms of various descriptions, ammunition, clothing, and every kind of military equipage necessary for a campaign. A number of Americans, some of them gentlemen, and persons of good standing in society, though mostly, I believe, of crooked fortunes, have embarked. Few of us, before entering the ship, saw our leader, but had our

communication with those, who were his acknowledged agents and advocates. We have, as yet, made no definite engagements with him, nor he with us; and I presume, if upon further insight into the business, or experience of the service, we shall be dissatisfied, we may, if we please, withdraw; though it must be confessed our destinies, now we have proceeded so far, are seriously joined with those of Miranda. Do you ask, whether our taking a part in this enterprise consists with our relation to our country, or with moral right, to say nothing of common discretion? I hope it is inconsistent with neither. I will not say that there are not some of our company desperate or base enough to disregard these weighty considerations. Perhaps it is a matter of indifference to many of the volunteers in what cause they act; if it do but promise them an opportunity of distinguishing themselves by martial achievements, and afford a chance of acquiring some portion of the riches, supposed to be in the hands of unworthy possessors in the south. By the issue of this undertaking they can hardly lose, and may gain. But the greater number of those who can reasonably look for high places, or large emolument are

not desperadoes, though they are adventurers ; and although they are willing, from situation or temper, to try a bold and hazardous scheme, it would be illiberal as well as unjust to infer that they would act an unprincipled or dishonourable part.

We are encouraged in the belief that our government has given its implied sanction to this expedition, and this circumstance, taken in connexion with the official language of the President, and the known sentiments of some of the political party that now prevails, leads us to suppose that our government expects or intends, very soon explicitly to authorise the use of force against Spain. Under such impressions, we think we shall not be called to account as violating the pacifick relations of the United States. The project of appearing for the relief of the oppressed, under the banners of a celebrated chief, who is said to be their greatest friend and favorite ; of lending our assistance to found an independent state, in extensive, fertile and populous regions, where the spirit of the people is crushed and the resources of nature are kept down by a vile colonial policy, presents itself to our imaginations and hearts in the most attractive

light, and makes us rejoice that it has fallen to our lot, to attempt the deliverance of a large portion of our fellow men. We flatter ourselves it is honourable and humane to be thus engaged ; still I am sensible that nothing short of complete success will ensure such a design the approbation of the mass of mankind. If we succeed, our fame will take care of itself. To quiet the revoltings of our humanity and satisfy us that we are not going upon cruel work, we are told that a revolution can take place in the country proposed, with little violence and perhaps without the loss of much blood : the people are said to be now awake to their sufferings, and inclined and competent to remove the cause, as the government by which they are oppressed is weak and inefficient. On this disposition of the inhabitants to join the standard of our leader in such numbers as to compel the few friends of the old order to make terms without delay, we place our expectations of success. It is also intimated that we shall receive, as far as occasion shall require, the countenance and co-operation of the British. After all, it must be confessed, we may be " plucking a thousand dangers on our heads ;" but we presume our conductor knows what he



is doing, and will lead us to great exploits and splendid fortunes.

---

## LETTER II.

*Account of Miranda.—His age.—Leander spoken by the British Frigate Cleopatra, and near being sent to Burmuda for trial.—Sailors impressed.—Happy result.*

*February 9th, 1806.*

GEN. MIRANDA has heretofore employed, and sometimes agitated, the public mind. He bore a conspicuous part in the French army under Dumourier, whom, it is said, with what truth I know not, he used very ill. In the early period of the French revolution, he is mentioned both with praise and censure.—From the opportunity I have had to see and hear him, since my coming on board, I should suppose him to possess great talents. He excels all men that ever I have known, in colloquial eloquence and power of persuasion. He discovers a full mind, furnished with comprehensive and accurate information, improved by extensive reading, by travelling and observation. According to his own account he is

in the fifty second year of his age. His appearance is that of sixty. Perhaps no man living can boast a more retentive memory. His manners and address are extremely pleasing. In the treatment of us, his volunteers, he is all affability and condescension. This may be his habit, or it may proceed from the interest he has at present in conciliating our esteem and good will. May his courteous demeanour continue when we shall have accepted our commissions, and have come under his power. He is very much disposed to conversation. With a fund of materials to render it instructive and amusing, he makes a judicious selection of topics; accordingly, to the young men, some of whom have just left college, he talks of literature, and recommends the study of the Spanish language and of mathematicks. Proficiency in these branches, he tells them, will ensure promotion in his army. The gentlemen more advanced in years are entertained with his ideas on the subjects of politicks and war. The general often cites a part of the history of his own life and travels, to illustrate the opinions which he seems anxious to inculcate. It is evident enough, that he aims to sow in the minds of

his followers, the seeds of heroical deeds ; of liberty, and revolution. I will not venture to predict what kind of a crop his efforts may produce, as I have scarcely any acquaintance with my fellow adventurers.

12th, 8 o'clock, A. M. At this moment, a cry from a man stationed at the mast head, announces a sail in sight ; she is too far distant, however, to enable us to distinguish what kind of vessel ; I notice it creates considerable anxiety on board—particularly with the general. We shall probably know something more of this strange sail before long, as she is sailing nearly in a line with us, is somewhat to leeward, but if disposed, may speak us in two or three hours. 11 o'clock, A. M. the strange vessel turns out to be a large vessel in pursuit of us.

Captain Lewis has shortened sail to let her come up. If she is French or Spanish, she will probably speak to us in harsh language, and we shall be obliged to fight—God knows what our fate would be if captured ; for I believe we must appear to them a suspicious set, who are on the high seas in a very questionable shape. If she is English, perhaps “ all may be well.” I must conclude, as we

are going to prepare for action. Our sea commander says, "if she is an enemy, we must overcome or perish."

13th. The affair is settled very much to our satisfaction; but not without a thousand alternate hopes and fears. Within four hours after my last, we expected to be now making the best of our way to Bermuda, under the lee of a British frigate. Yesterday, at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, we were spoke by the ship seen in the morning; she proved to be his Britannick Majesty's ship Cleopatra, of forty guns, commanded by captain John Wight. The first lieutenant of the frigate came on board and examined our ship and crew. We were detained nearly twenty-four hours, and had nineteen men pressed—mostly Irish, with American protections. As a kind of return for the impressed sailors, we received twelve Americans, who had been taken out of American vessels lately captured by the Cleopatra, to the list of which, the Leander was nigh being added. Captain Lewis went on board with the ship's papers, which showed her to be the Leander, an American ship, bound to St. Domingo. These were on examination, declared by captain Wight to be unsatisfactory. A

gentleman then by the name of Armstrong, went on board with instructions from the general, and joined with Lewis in expostulating with the commander of the frigate, but without effect. At last the general himself was obliged to appear on board the *Cleopatra*. He stated certain particulars to captain Wight, and shewed him documents, which justified the English captain in allowing our ship to proceed. This event has confirmed our impressions, respecting the nature and objects of this expedition. General Miranda, I think, must have effected the release of the *Leander*, by explaining a part, or the whole of his plan, relative to South America; and by producing credentials from the British government, authorising, or at least protecting him in the undertaking. This idea is strengthened, by Miranda saying that captain Wight had promised to assist in the enterprise. The general remained on board the frigate all night, and returned this morning at eleven o'clock. I am extremely glad we were overtaken by this ship; for the result tends to put us at ease about the consistency of our design with the laws of nations, and proves to the world that we are not a "band of desperate pirates," a

description given to us by some persons before we sailed from New-York, and propagated afterwards, in whispers, through the ship. Besides, the expedition is now placed on a respectable footing by having, as we presume, the acknowledgment and countenance of England. We are all in high spirits and high hopes. The general now speaks more openly about the enterprise; he expresses great anxiety to begin his operations; and complains of having been so long detained in a good wind, notwithstanding it has turned out so much to the advantage of his project, both on account of the promised assistance, and a certificate that he procured of captain Wight, to prevent future search or detention by other British cruisers which we may happen to meet.

## LETTER III.

*Spanish schooner brought to.—Conjectures upon this unusual procedure.—Stratagem to deceive the master of the schooner.—Miranda appoints his officers.—Their names and distribution into corps.—Uniforms, &c.—Arrival at Jacquemel.—Accident.*

*February 15th, 1806.*

WE are now in the Mona passage, between the islands of Porto Rico and St. Domingo. A circumstance occurred this morning of a somewhat singular nature; and to my view not very agreeable. About 10 o'clock we saw two strange sails, a brig and a schooner; in a short time after, the Leander fired a shot at the latter, whether by the order of Miranda or at the instance of Lewis, I know not. The vessel being alarmed, altered her course and endeavoured to escape, upon which we discharged several shot; and she was at last, obliged, for fear of being sunk, to leave to under our lee. The captain was immediately ordered on board with his papers; and upon examination the vessel proved to be a Spanish schooner, from St. Martins, loaded with Logwood and bound to St. Bartholomews.

After an hour's detention, she was permitted to proceed. Previous to the captain coming on board, the general and Lewis had some private conversation, at the conclusion of which, the latter ordered all those of our crew who could speak French, to use no other language while this man was in the ship ; at the same time directing that no English should be spoken. This order was strictly obeyed, and the gang-way was instantly crowded with fifteen or twenty sailors and servants, who began talking in French. When the captain came over the side and found himself among Frenchmen, he brought his hand forcibly to his breast and exclaimed, " Vive L' Empereur ;" but I cannot express the terror he manifested upon arriving on the quarter deck, and finding himself in the midst of Englishmen and Americans.

You may ask what right had the private ship *Leander* to bring to any vessel whatever at sea ? Why did general Miranda permit, or order such a procedure ? Or was he ignorant of maritime customs and usages ? Suppose this vessel had actually been engaged in a contraband trade, could the *Leander* have captured, or even detained her ? Then by what right



was this schooner fired at, compelled to heave to, the captain ordered on board and his papers examined? These questions, I confess I cannot answer to my own satisfaction; and therefore probably not to yours. The only apology which I can imagine is, that our chief had it in view to gratify his curiosity, or obtain intelligence which might be important; I cannot suppose he had any idea of seizing the vessel and converting her to his own use; or that if he had, our sea commander would have consented.

*Feb. 17th.* Last Thursday general Miranda assigned to his volunteers the several ranks which they are to hold in his army, in a General Order, communicated to us, by the officer next in rank, (at present) to himself. In the copy of this order, which I shall give you in the margin,\* you will notice some names with which you are acquainted, and a number of others, whose distinction is yet to be acquired.

---

• “ *Leander, Feb. 14th, 1806, Latitude* }  
     *21. 27. N. Longitude 64: 3 W.* ” }

“ G. O.” “ Parole, America. Countersign, Liberty.”

“ The Commander in Chief has thought proper to make the following appointments of officers, in the Columbian Army, and different corps thereof, as hereafter mentioned, to commence rank and pay from the first day of January 1806.”

There are several others who have as yet received no particular appointment, but who are on probation for something. Besides the twenty-six names just mentioned, there

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. William Armstrong,          | Colonel,           |
| 2. Thomas Lewis,               | do.                |
| 3. William Steuben Smith,      | } Lieut. Colonel,  |
| Aid de Camp to the             |                    |
| Commander in Chief             |                    |
| with the rank of               |                    |
| 4. Henry Sands,                | Major.             |
| 5. Barent Roorbach,            | Captain.           |
| 6. Thomas Billop,              | do.                |
| 7. David Heckle,               | do.                |
| 8. Daniel R. Durning,          | do.                |
| 9. James B. Gardner,           | do.                |
| 10. Gustavus Adolphus Burgudd, | do.                |
| 11. Samuel C. Lowdon,          | do.                |
| 12. William Hosack,            | First Lieutenant.  |
| 13. Charles Johnson,           | do.                |
| 14. John Orford,               | do.                |
| 15. Paula Theodore George,     | do.                |
| 16. Daniel D. Kemper,          | do.                |
| 17. Miles L. Hall,             | do.                |
| 18. John T. O. Sullivan,       | do.                |
| 19. William Lowdon,            | do.                |
| 20. Edward Yates (Adjutant)    | Second Lieutenant. |
| 21. Francis Farquharson,       | do.                |
| 22. Henry Newton,              | do.                |

are two others in place, who are said not to belong to the military catalogue. Mr. Jonathan Smith, supercargo of the ship, and Mr. Thomas Molini, secretary to his excellency the general. The first of these gentlemen is commonly called Major, but I believe incorrectly, as he has not yet taken a Columbian commission. What we now see and hear justifies the supposition of an expectation in his excellency that a numerous and well organized army will spring from these roots. Those, who know nothing of the military profession, are to learn it as fast as possible, in order to be ready for training Spanish recruits, which we are told by the general, are waiting our arrival on the Main. With this employment and the study of the Spanish language, to make themselves understood by their new friends, all will have enough to do. It is no time for play now ; though it is easy to see that some of them, even those of sedate years think of nothing else, and the general has

- 
- |                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| 23. James Biggs,   | do. |
| 24. Thomas Gill,   | do. |
| 25. John Moore,    | do. |
| 26. David Burnett, | do. |

seemed to encourage it. He supposes, perhaps, that in our situation, thought might "make thick our blood," and merriment will rob our ambiguous voyage of some "taste of tediousness."

We are stationed in the different corps of the Columbian Army, in the manner of the following recapitulation, which I also place in the margin for your inspection ;\* this form I

---

\* RECAPITULATION.

*Engineers.*

John Orford,	First Lieutenant.
--------------	-------------------

*Artillery.*

Samuel Lowdon,	Captain.
William Hosack,	First Lieutenant.
William Lowdon,	do.
James Biggs,	Second Lieutenant.
Francis Farquharson,	do.

*Corps of Artificers.*

David Heckle,	Captain.
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*First Regiment Light Dragoons.*

Daniel R. Durning,	Captain.
Gustavus Adolphus Burgudd,	do.
Edward Yates,	Cornet.

*First Regiment of Riflemen.*

William Armstrong,	Colonel.
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px 0;"/>	Lieut.-Colonel.
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px 0;"/>	Major.
Barent Roorbach,	Captain.
Thomas Billop,	do.

shall observe, when most convenient, with all documents, relating to our enterprise, which I may think you will be interested to see, or it may be proper to communicate.

Colonel Armstrong is appointed quarter master general, with two assistants, (lieutenants Riggs and Newton,) until further orders, captain Roorbach major of brigade, and captain Billop deputy pay-master general.

After the establishment of our rank, station, &c. we were informed what regimental uniforms the commander in chief had adopted. They are adapted to a warm climate and may answer very well for a beginning, though between you and me, the patterns, whether in-

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Charles Johnson,	First Lieutenant.
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Miles L. Hall,	do.
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Thomas Gill,	do.
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*First Regiment North American Infantry.*

Thomas Lewis,	Colonel.
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Henry Sands,	Major.
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James B. Gardner,	Captain.
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Daniel Kemper,	First Lieutenant.
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John T. O. Sullivan,	do.
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Henry Newton,	Second Lieutenant.
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David Burnett,	do.
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John Moore,	do.
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Dr. Samuel Scofield, of New York, is appointed Surgeon to the Army.

tended for his excellency, the officers or privates do not meet our ideas of either taste or elegance. The order pointing out our uniforms is thus headed. I have transcribed the introduction, with a view of showing you to what importance the affair of regimentals is exalted by the sagacious author, to say nothing of the beauty of its composition.

“ G. O.” “ Parole, Warren. Countersign, Bunkers Hill. As the first step towards establishing discipline in an army, is a fixed uniform for each corps, from which no partial deviation is to be made, without the special permission of the commander in chief ; he has, for the present, fixed the following uniforms, for the different corps, with which he hopes the different officers will provide themselves, as soon as convenient.” Then comes a description of our particular regimentals. The infantry dress in blue and yellow ; the artillery in blue and red ; the engineers and artificers in blue and black velvet ; the riflemen in green ; and the dragoons in yellow and blue ; but I should furnish you with an hour’s reading, were I to attempt giving you a correct idea of all that variety of cut and fashion by which our corps are respectively designated.

We are now sailing along the south coast of St. Domingo. The land is very mountainous and affords many delightful views ; though there is scarcely any cultivation on the part now in sight, in proportion to its extent. Jacquemel is the place to which we are bound, and a day or two at farthest will bring us into port. Here I imagine many circumstances will occur worth relating ; if so, my journal shall take care of them.

*18th meridian.* The harbour of Jacquemel is now in sight, and we have a fine steady breeze. Major Smith and captain Lewis are preparing to set off for Port au Prince, on business relative to the expedition. They are going on shore in the boat before the ship anchors, and take guides and horses at Jacquemel to expedite their journey. On their way they will cross the highest mountains of this Island.

*Half past 1, P. M.* It is but a few minutes since we recovered from a most terrifying accident. The jolly boat, by the carelessness of some of the sailors, upset in lowering down a stern, the crew being in at the same time. They were struggling in the sea fifty minutes ; but were all fortunately saved by the spirited exertions of three seamen, who

jumped overboard to their assistance. In this work of humanity, captain Gardner set the example, by first throwing himself into the water; and he merits the highest praise for his feeling and his courage, to which two of the sailors owe their lives.

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#### LETTER IV.

*Difficulty of getting into port.—A quarrel, and its apprehended mischiefs.—Scene on the deck of the Leander.—Form of officers commissions.—A sail seen.—Complaint of the effects of delay.—Return of Capt. Lewis.*

*Jacquemel harbour, Feb. 20, 1806.*

WE have arrived in port, but have had a troublesome time since my last. A pilot came on board in the evening of the 18th to conduct us to anchor, which he ordered to be cast too soon; the consequence was, we lost it and sixty fathoms of cable, and were obliged to stand out to sea again.

I wish I had not to inform you of another disagreeable occurrence; one, which I am sorry to say, does little credit to our chief, and may materially injure, if not ruin our enterprize.



A short time before captain Lewis left the ship for Jacquemel, a violent quarrel took place between him and colonel Armstrong, occasioned by the latter having struck the steward of the former, for not keeping the table furniture, or something of this kind, in proper order. The quarter-master general undertook, on deck, to punish the steward with a hearty rope's ending. Lewis hearing the cries of his servant, came from below to enquire into the cause; and perceiving what Armstrong was doing or ordered him to desist, which he did, but not without strenuously asserting his right to chastise any person in the ship. Lewis told him that he should exercise no such authority in a vessel where he commanded. Both exhibited great bitterness, and dealt each other an abundance of hard words. The general took the side of Armstrong; and Lewis, who is a man not to be intimidated by sounding names, informed his excellency, that neither he nor his quarter-master general had any thing to do with the discipline of the ship, and that whilst he commanded the Leander, he should take care not to allow Miranda, nor any of his officers, to assume authority, which of right, solely existed in his hands. A great deal of inde-

cent warmth was shewn on all sides, but in the highest degree by the general himself, who appeared, before the storm was over, more fit for bedlam than for the command of an army. An everlasting breach, I fear, is now made between him and the captain. Among other things said in the heat of their fury, Miranda insisted that the ship was his property, and that the captain was obliged to command her under his directions; whilst Lewis more than intimated, that till she was paid for, he was to be consulted, and had a will in the business.

It is painful, and even shocking, to discover that our chief is capable of so much passion, and upon such an occasion. It is not a little important to us, that he, who holds our fortunes in his hands, and is to govern us, should be able to govern himself. The conduct I have related is equally against his dignity, and against his prudence. We depend on the sailors, who are bound to us by nothing but the ship's articles, who are nearly one hundred and fifty, to join the army; but this cannot be effected without the co-operation and countenance of Lewis. All of them, except about twenty volunteers, collected from the butchers stalls in Bear market, to be dragoons, and ex-

change the clever for the broad sword, have sailed with him before, and are very much attached to him. When they find the authority, which, according to the usage of the sea, belongs exclusively to the captain of the ship, assumed by Miranda and his officers, they will certainly consider themselves injured, and will side with the captain. If Lewis sets his face against their enlisting, they will not listen to the proposals of serving on land and becoming musket men. Miranda has therefore every motive of interest, if no other, to keep on good terms with the ship master. If this quarrel does not stop where it is, we may as well relinquish the expedition, for it cannot prosper under such dissensions.

*February 26d.* The following is the scene now exhibited on the deck of our ship from sun rising to sun set :

One side of the quarter deck is occupied by a printing press, at which several young men of that profession are busy in striking off the general's proclamations to the people of South America, and setting the types for printing our commissions. The other side is taken up with two groups of Mars' youngest sons, employed with military books ; some studying,

some reading, and others looking at the pictures. His excellency is at the head of one of these parties, philosophizing on various subjects, and passing from one to another with his peculiar volubility. At this moment he is painting the dangers of a military life. He ends every recital of hardships, by telling the young gentlemen how much honour results to those who bear them with fortitude. Notwithstanding this encouraging conclusion, the youngsters look rather aghast ! which he observes in silence.

When the old gentleman gets upon this topic, which he does almost daily, he never fails to inform his pupils of his own feats and sufferings when he was young and in the wars. His countenance, which is always extremely expressive at such times, gives evidence of the great pleasure he feels in dwelling on " disastrous chances " and " hair breadth 'scapes." I confess to you, I am sorry to find he loves dearly to talk of himself, and likes those best who appear most willing to hear him on this subject ; for I believe that vanity and egotism, which are qualities destitute of any recommendation whatever, are generally associated with other traits that have no claim to approbation. I must

confess too, that he appears not a little tinctured with pedantry ; a pardonable fault in an Academician, but not so respectable in a hero and statesman.

Next is seen the armourer's bench, with all his apparatus for repairing old muskets, pointless bayonets and rusty swords. This tinker has his hands full, as our arms are none of the best, and seem to have been already condemned in some other service. Whoever purchased them for the expedition, was either no judge of arms, or he has been kinder to himself than his employer.

A few feet from the place where I am now writing, is a noisy set of animals called volunteers, going through the manual exercise, under the direction of a drill sergeant, who looks as bold as a lion, and roars nearly as loud. I hope he may feel as fierce when we shall have something serious to do. In the vicinity of these fellows, the regimental tailor, and half a dozen of his cross legged disciples are placed, surrounded by the materials and implements of their trade. A little further are several carpenters, employed in making staves for the pikes, with which our cavalry is to be armed. Beyond this the sailors are

seen working with their ropes, tar blocks, &c. and here my description ends.

On surveying these operations, the general looks mightily pleased, and says, "we shall soon be ready for the Main." Every thing goes on merrily; but we are not permitted to step on shore; this is a great hardship to many; for my part, I don't know the cause of the prohibition, nor do I care much when it is removed.

*February 25th.* I give a copy of the commissions intended for the officers of Miranda's army. They were finished to-day.

"DON FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA,

"Commander in Chief of the Columbian Army:

"By virtue of power and authority vested in me, I hereby constitute and appoint —, in the army of Columbia, under my command; and all officers, his superiors and inferiors; non-commissioned officers, soldiers, and others; are hereby required to respect and obey him as such, agreeable to the articles of war.

(Signed) "FRAN: DE MIRANDA.

"THOMAS MOLINI, *Sec'y and Regt.*"

Several hundred of Miranda's proclamations are printed off. These manifestos, addressed to the people of South America, as you would

expect, declare his views and intentions with respect to their country. They paint in forcible language the hardships and multiplied injuries, under which these people at present labor; all of which he promises to remove; and they also inform the inhabitants of every description, how they are to regulate themselves, and what they are to do when their deliverers arrive.

This document puts an end to the imaginations, which some of our company entertained, that we were destined to that part of the Spanish dominions, which had made, or was about to make encroachments on Louisiana, or New-Orleans. It is also silent about the connexion of the government of the United States with our schemes, on which we have always relied, at least so far as to believe that we were not contravening the wishes, nor exposing ourselves to the displeasure of those, who are at the head of American affairs. But though this official paper claims no countenance from the President or executive of our country, the nature of Miranda's insinuations, and the circumstances of our outfit, have always kept and do now keep us under the impression, that all is right on this quarter; and that we have not

put ourselves out of the protection of the United States.—

Yesterday morning we saw a strange sail off the harbour, supposed by some to be a French privateer. I notice it creates great inquietude in the general's mind. The appearance of a French frigate would place us in a disagreeable situation, for we could not possibly get out, if she were disposed to prevent it, and the Leander, with his excellency Don Francisco de Miranda, would be deemed an object to justify the attention and vigilance of the Monsieurs.

There are yet no signs of the Cleopatra. I before observed that the general said he had received assurances of captain Wight's co-operation. Every vessel, that is descried in the offing, excites his fears or curiosity; and he seldom fails to request somebody, first asking if they have good sight, to take the spy glass and see if that vessel is the Cleopatra; upon hearing an unfavourable report from the observer, he says, "well, never mind, should she not join us here, she will come to us on the Spanish Main." All this is calculated to make us imagine that the British interest themselves in our success. Yet if this be the case, there seems to have been no



plan for securing their aid; and our hopes from them are directed to a single ship accidentally spoken at sea. There is a report here that the United States are fitting out two frigates to come in pursuit of us and conduct us back. We cannot trace this story to its origin, but deem it incredible and ridiculous. Captain Lewis and Major Smith have been gone to Port au Prince ten days, (five longer than was expected, the distance being about one day's journey) and not a line has been received from them. This delay is to be lamented. If the chances of our success depend on surprise, they must be diminishing every moment. We did calculate on being in Caraccas before this. We wait the return of these gentlemen with anxiety on several accounts. I shall be uneasy till I see how Lewis and Miranda meet one another again. It is to be hoped they have both improved the time of separation, in bringing their minds to reason, and trying to forget their resentments. If they shall be cold and reserved, when they come together again, I shall expect the breach will be irreparable; for I have often observed that when persons after a disagreement separate without an eclairecissement satisfactory to both and appear distant and suspicious at their first

meeting, it is the commencement of a durable enmity. The captain is high spirited and unyielding ; and the general I am persuaded is a man of unruly temper, obstinate and determined. The judicious interposition of a third person, in such a case, will sometimes be effectual, if this shall be necessary I hope Major R. who is qualified for the office will try his influence. We look for the return of this gentleman with solicitude on another account. The general professes to believe we shall be joined by the Emperor, a noble ship now at Port au Prince, under the command of capt. Jacob Lewis (brother of the commander of our ship) who is a man of resource. It is supposed our messengers are detained at Port au Prince to attempt arrangements for this purpose. This ship will be a great acquisition, and indeed will be necessary, if much force is required for our undertaking, and no British vessel of war, as we apprehend, is engaged.

The Black Emperor's principal officer stationed at this port has sent a letter on board to the commanding officer of the Leander, demanding the reason why our ship has not entered at the custom house. The true reason, I suppose, is that it was deemed unnecessary to

go through this form, we having no views of trade, and nothing on board, but what is intended for our own use. I do not know what answer this letter received ; but the guard is doubled ; and many unusual precautions are to be observed.

*Monday, 3d. March.* Yesterday a letter arrived from Capt. Lewis, announcing his intention of returning this day. He has come accordingly, but he brings no intelligence that is made publick, nor can we judge what is the result of his proceedings.

The meeting between him and his Excellency, though not the most cordial, is more friendly than I expected, and I cannot but hope their contention will now die. The officers are to be permitted to go on shore to-morrow, and some of the young men are half frantick with the idea. One half will be allowed to leave the ship at one time, and all will draw lots in the morning to determine who shall first be let out of prison. If I get a first turn, I shall exchange it with some one more eager for the release than myself, that I may finish letters to send by a vessel that will sail for the United States in two days.

## LETTER V.

*Columbian colours displayed.--Schooner Bee chartered.--Report from Lagaira.--Aspasia.--Disturbance in the Bee.--Disappointment respecting the ship Emperor--Schooner Bacchus engaged--supposed to bring a spy--Treatment of a Danish vessel.*

*March 12th, 1806.*

**THIS** day the Columbian colours were displayed on board for the first time. This Ensign is formed of the three primary colours which predominate in the rainbow. We made a fête on the occasion—a gun was fired and toasts were drank to the auspices of a standard, which is expected to wave to the triumph of freedom and humanity in a country long oppressed.

14th. Our attention has for several days been attracted by the schooner mentioned before. She is equipped as a privateer, and frequently sails backwards and forwards across the harbour. She comes very often within gun shot and remains in sight for hours ; and is probably a French privateer or some vessel stationed here to watch our motions. Last night the guard was doubled again and orders

given to keep a strict look-out; under the apprehension that she might send her boats in, to cut out some vessels in port, which our general, in the exercise of the right of the strongest, if no other, will undoubtedly prevent, should it be attempted.

The supercargo returned from Port au Prince to-day. He brings no news of interest, except that I understand a Philadelphia schooner, called the Bee, has been chartered to accompany the Leander. Having no guns, she will not add to our force so much as to our comfort, by taking out some of our officers and men, who are greatly in one another's way in this small ship.

16th. An event has occurred, that excites a suspicion in my mind that we shall not arrive at the Main unlooked for. A schooner came in here yesterday, named the Bacchus, the master of which gave the following account, when hailed by the Leander, viz. that he sailed from Philadelphia bound to Lagaira, and on his arrival there he found the place blockaded, or heard that all the vessels in port were under embargo (I don't know which) and therefore he made the best of his way to St. Domingo. On what account this blockade or embargo was made.

he professes not to know. This relation of the master, was and is represented to the company on board, who you may suppose are naturally inquisitive on the subject, as entitled to no confidence. The general and captain appeared peculiarly incredulous. But I observed it kept our chief and his confidential officers, for hours in secret conversation.

It being my turn to go on shore, I was the more desirous to improve it, in the hope of getting some further intelligence at the coffee house or elsewhere; for on board nothing is to be learned of any material circumstance, and our curiosity is discouraged as inconsistent with that confidence and secrecy which is necessary to be maintained by the principals in the expedition. But I gained no satisfaction, not meeting with any of the officers or crew of the *Bacchus*. What information I received favoured the suspicion that the vessel, perhaps through the agency of the Spanish minister, left Philadelphia as a spy; or at least that she came in that character from the Main to this place. Notwithstanding his apparent contempt of the master's story, I find that Miranda proposes to take measures that no persons on board her shall make such communications

as may injure the expedition; which steps her says are justified by the laws of nations, and very probably she will not be allowed to leave this before us.

This morning arrived here the *Aspasia* from Baltimore, mounting fourteen guns, commanded by captain Bumberry. Soon after she came in sight, she hoisted two signals and fired two guns, and the privateer schooner, which has appeared so often, after apparently standing out to escape her, hove about and came within speaking distance. Our doubts whether the ship was a friend or enemy, occasioned Lewis to prepare the *Leander* for defence; and we remained at our quarters till we saw her taking in sail and making ready to anchor. captain B. confirms our suspicions respecting the schooner.

*March 18th.* The *Bee* lies close under our stern; last night between eight and nine o'clock, a voice from her called for assistance, and at the same time the noise seemed to indicate a mutiny or riot. Several of the *Leander's* principal officers, armed, hastened on board and soon produced silence, bringing four or five sailors away who were put in irons during the night. It appears, however, that

the disturbance was nothing but the effect of the liquor drank to the honour of St. Patrick's day. But it seemed to give the general as much alarm as if it had been a concerted mutiny. Two of our non-commissioned officers were yesterday turned into the ranks for insolence to their superiors. Miranda is growing more strict, and not without necessity, in my opinion. Many of our people seem as if too well instructed in the right of self government, to be governed by the authority, or submit to the ordinary and indispensable restraints of military service.

*March 23d.* After all our delay, we are not to be joined by the Emperor. A week ago intelligence was received, that she had put to sea with the intention of joining the Leander. A gentleman this morning from Port au Prince, gives information that she has returned into port. The reason is supposed to be, that the law of Congress, prohibiting intercourse with St. Domingo, and the news of which, had just come, induces captain Jacob Lewis to remain, in order to close his business in the Island.

The schooner Bacchus is to be taken into our service, she is or will be purchased by a



captain Donahue, and chartered by Miranda. The officers and crew of this schooner have not been on board of her for some time. They must have been either persuaded or compelled to disappear. That she was from the first, regarded with suspicion by the general, is certain. The night after the arrival of the Bacchus, a gentleman who arrived in her came on board our ship on the pretence of visiting an officer of his acquaintance, and while here, I know he learned a number of particulars respecting our enterprise. He has not been seen since. It is said, I believe with truth, that Miranda considered him a spy and has obliged him to give security, that he will not leave this island until we are gone, and that he keeps himself close on board some vessel in port.

The captain Donahue, of whom I have spoken, is a seaman by profession; and was appointed a major in the Columbian Army, on the 19th inst. and Jonathan Smith, esqr. supercargo, was the same day made a brevet major.

This night three American vessels sailed, homeward bound. The Leander has been taking upon herself airs, that I for one, cannot

approve. But when there are no laws to be followed, it is well understood, that those who have the power, make laws for themselves. It being suspected that the Charleston packet, (one of the vessels just mentioned) had taken away two of our sailors, the second mate with a party of armed men was dispatched for them, and upon search found that no man belonging to us was in the suspected vessel. On setting out to return, the mate ordered the muskets and pistols of his crew to be discharged to prevent injury in rowing back. The flashes were seen by us, the packet being about two miles distant, and it was supposed her captain had refused to submit to search and that the officer had used force to execute his orders. Upon this another boat with an armed crew went out under the command of the chief mate, and meeting the first boat on its way back, they went along side of a Danish schooner proposing to search her for our absent men. The master protested against it as a usurpation in such language as such conduct would naturally provoke, but without effect. He was not only obliged right or wrong to open his hatches, but received much personal insult and abuse

from our mates, besides getting the flat of one of their sabres severely laid over his back.

They forced one sailor out of his bed and brought him to the *Leander*; and endeavoured to justify their proceedings by saying that the captain of the vessel to which he formerly belonged had given them permission to secure him whenever found! Had Lewis been here, I think this would not have taken place.

## LETTER VI.

*Preparations for departure.—Declaration made and sworn to by the officers.—Compensation of the officers.*

*March 25th, 1806.*

THE last three days have been particularly employed in preparations for sea; and I presume from the arrangements lately made, we shall not remain here much longer. We have accepted our commissions as officers in the *Columbian Army*, and made the following ~~oath~~ and oath of fidelity to the cause.

“As Law is the basis of discipline and regularity in an army.—We the subscribers, do agree to accept from general Don Francisco

de Miranda, the different commissions and ranks (as specified therein) in the Army of Columbia, now raising, or to be raised by him, for the service of the free people of South America, independent of Spain. And we do also hereby solemnly promise to be governed in all things agreeable to the articles of war of the United States of North America; with such alterations in *form only* (as have been read and exhibited to us) so as to adapt them to the difference of government under which we now are, or may be; and until regularly discharged from the said army by him, or his successors, legally appointed by the supreme authority of that country after the service of at least two campaigns; and we acknowledge to have taken the oath hereunto annexed, as prescribed by the third section of the articles of War.—viz;”

“I swear to be true and faithful to the free people of South America, independent of Spain, and to serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whatsoever, and to observe and obey the orders of the supreme government of that country legally appointed; and the orders of the general and officers set over me by them. *On board the Leander, Jaquemet harbour, 24th day of March 1806.*”

Major Sands feeling some scruples against subscribing to this oath, said that he wished to be "perfectly satisfied" that by his engagement in this expedition, it should not be understood that he did in any measure abjure his own country. Miranda observed that in order to put our minds at rest on this subject, the Major or any other gentleman who chose might annex to his signature of the covenant and oath, "that they did not intend by taking it to cancel their allegiance to the United States." This declaration of Miranda was requisite to the satisfaction of the officers generally, though one of the number chose to remark, "if your excellency permits every person to make his trifling objections, it will require a long time before this well understood business can be finished, and what can be done on a sheet of paper will require volumes." It was not very obvious what could prompt this derision of the scruples of his associates, unless that being a lawyer, he thought the judge-advocate general of the free people of Columbia would be most likely to fall upon the greatest flatterer of the commander in chief.

This question being settled on deck, the officers were summoned into the cabin, where

col. Armstrong read and explained the articles of war of the United States; and the alterations in *form* not in substance or spirit, which were to be made in them. "Notice, gentlemen," said the colonel, "the object of this change is to suit the wording of the articles to the local names and situations of the country where they are to take effect; thus for the army of the United States, will be substituted the army of South America; and for the President, or Congress of the United States, will be used the Supreme Authority of the free people of South America, or something of this kind." The business being thus well understood, every officer, according to rank, took the oath and subscribed his name to the obligation. You may observe there are no conditions as to compensation made with us by Miranda, except that we shall have the benefit of the articles of war of the United States. When we engaged at New York with his agents we were promised pay on the most liberal scale. The pay of a colonel was to be ten dollars per day, a major eight, a captain six, a lieutenant four, &c. In the general order assigning us our commissions, you must have noticed, we

were to commence rank and pay from the beginning of this year.

Towards evening capt. Lewis returned from Port au Prince and set about the last preparations for our departure.

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## LETTER VII.

*Departure from Jacquemel.—Change of men to the schooners.—Officers engaged at this island.—A brawl.—A sail seen.*

*Leander at Sea, March 28th, 1806.*

AT length is terminated our tedious stay at Jacquemel; and we go we trust “to—— some enterprise that hath a stomach in’t” Our naval force is the Leander, attended by two schooners, the Bee and Bacchus. The number of us all does not exceed two hundred; for we have not recruited our number at this island, except with a few officers, and one man of colour for a pilot. The men want discipline and the officers experience; this appears to you no doubt a miserable force. Miranda does not pretend to turn his eyes from our weakness, but professes to have other dependence. He has continually assured us that

there are good officers and good soldiers, with an abundance of every thing in readiness for us, the moment we set our feet in South America, which, to use his own words, "ceases that instant to belong to the King of Spain. The command of the Bacchus has been given to capt. Gardner, the Bee is in charge of her original master, whose name is Huddle. The former has proposed to mount several short carronnades, but the general insists that there is little danger and as little occasion to arm, and has confined him to one gun. If we fall in with French or Spaniards of any force, I think our case will be desperate—and the "question of the fight" will be our necks.

The Leander being extremely full, it was necessary to provide for a part of the troops in the schooners. For obvious reasons, those, to whom the proposition of going on board these unprotected vessels, objected, as far as consistent with military obedience. After considerable difficulty seven officers and several men, including the printers were prevailed upon or rather compelled to change their vessel. Neither of the schooners, I am informed, has a single regular paper to save her from being



captured by the cruisers or privateers, which every where infest these waters; all their dependence is keeping close to the *Leander*—if they separate, may Heaven's mercies be their protection, for they have no other.

Several gentlemen joined us just before we left *Jacquemel*. You will find their names and ranks in the general order of yesterday\*—The two first gentlemen on this list, are spoken of in terms of high commendation, as being such characters as we greatly need; whose junction with us is sincerely welcomed, though I perceive their ranks are envied, because they are considered as having superceded some *old vol-*

• “ *Leander, off Jacquemel, March 27th, 1806.*

“ G. O. “ Parole, Marcellus—Countersign, Intrepidity.

“ The Commander in Chief has been pleased to make the following appointments in the

*First Regiment of (North American) Infantry.*

George W. Kirkland, Esq. to be a Lieut. Colonel.

Jeremiah Powell, Esq. Major.

James F. Ledlie, Gent. Captain.

Charles Revington, Gent. First Lieutenant.

Robert Clark, Gent. do.

Abraham Judale, Gent. Surgeon in the Army.

James Stedman, Quarter Master with the rank of 2d. Lieutenant.

officers of five weeks standing. Lieut. col. Kirkland has the reputation of being an intrepid man, accustomed to service, possessing excellent talents, a liberal education, and considerable military knowledge.

Mr. Powell, from what I am informed, is also no small acquisition. Though not so extensively versed in the military art, he has all the requisite qualifications for becoming a good officer and is full of military ambition. He has been well educated and possesses abilities much beyond mediocrity, with the most amiable manners.

We had expectations that a Mr. Windsor, now at Port au Prince and the particular friend of these gentlemen, would have joined us; his character would have ensured him a respectful welcome; but his private affairs arrested his purpose.

Of the quality and standing of the rest of our new associates I have heard nothing either good or bad. If they do any thing worth recording you shall hear it.

We had not been under weigh but a little time before the demon of contention appeared again. The Bee a few hours ago run foul of our ship, stove the small boat astern into a

thousand pieces ; carried away our taff-rail and lost her own jib-boom. Immediately col. A. with the speaking trumpet began to reprimand the master of the schooner, and ordered him at his peril never to approach *so near* the *Leander* in future. Lewis instantly kindled at this interference of the quarter master general with his duty, and without any ceremony commanded him not to repeat an action of the kind. High and insulting words passed on both sides; till Miranda thought it necessary to take part in the affray, and notwithstanding his disposition to support his nearest officer, in this instance he decided against him. He schooled him very severely. Armstrong received these rebukes with great meekness, alleging that his anxiety for the common good prompted his interference, but promising that he would not offend again; the storm subsided, but grim looks are still seen in various directions. I suppose the war of frowns and words will not cease, till that of balls commences, which though more dangerous is not half so disagreeable as these eternal jarrings of discordant tempers. These gentleman can never agree, and our captain particularly appears to have an invincible dislike to the quarter master general.

*March 31st.* I had scarcely finished the last paragraph, when a brig was discovered standing towards us ; of course we were cleared for action and ordered to our quarters ; but in half an hour, finding she had no mind to make acquaintance with us, we retired from quarters to bed in sound skins. The general is not, nor any of his followers, wholly free from the apprehension of meeting a French or Spanish vessel of more strength than we shall be glad to see ; though the English cruisers occasion the Dons and Monsieurs to be very scarce in these seas, and the danger of being met is not great. Should any of the latter and we come in each other's way, we shall have but one of two alternatives, to run as fast or fight as hard as we can ; and we might very possibly not succeed in either. The last is our chief resource, though our crew have more bravery than skill. In sailing, the dullest cruiser in the West Indies would be an over match for the *Leander*, otherwise an excellent ship.

## LETTER VIII.

*Another dispute.—Ship falls to the leeward.—  
Chases a vessel.—The Leander cannot use the  
American Ensign.*

*April 1st, 1806.*

**SURELY** the pope and the holy fathers have not invoked heaven against Miranda's expedition in vain. It is worse and worse. The contest now has been between Lewis and the general. Capt. Gardner of the *Bacchus* addressed a line to col. Armstrong for some articles for the schooner; and for an addition of hands, complaining that he had not men enough to work the vessel. Lewis thought (and very properly in my opinion) this note should have been addressed to him and that it belonged to him to give an answer. The general thought otherwise, and observed that Lewis had nothing to do but to obey his orders. Lewis' temper could not bear this, and he took his stand. He declared the *Bacchus* should have none of his men, as he wanted all for his own vessel; and threatened that if he was overruled, he would resign. The altercation grew more and more violent, till Lewis resolved instantly to leave the ship. He directed his ser-

vant to produce his baggage that he might go on board the Bacchus, which had been ordered by him to heave to for that purpose. The mates of our ship seeing things going such lengths, swore they would follow Lewis and had their trunks brought on deck to be put into the boat, then along side. Matters having proceeded thus far, col. Kirkland, who had prudently waited till Lewis' passion had a little calmed down, undertook the office of mediation—and by good management at length accomplished the restoration of peace, greatly to the satisfaction of every one. The Bacchus was supplied, except with the sailors, which were deemed unnecessary to her; and we again made sail; for during the dispute we had been laying to. It is a grievous thing that Miranda has not taken more pains to cement his little band; and not suffered the ill will and malice, which might have been checked at first, to take such deep root in the minds of some of his principal officers, as to threaten deadly effects.

*April 6th.* Tell me, if you can, have all the demons of ill will and contradiction taken a stand against us, that we should fail in almost every thing which we set about? At

leaving Jacquemel it was the general's intention to anchor at Bonair, a small island near that part of the Spanish Main where it is supposed we are to land. After being ten days at sea, we have the mortification to find ourselves, through the ignorance of our pilot, carried almost to the bottom of the Gulf of Venezuela. We are seventy miles dead to leeward of Bonair. What with the trade winds and the current, which is common here, and may happen to set against us, and most likely does, at this very moment, we may be two weeks or twenty days in this Gulf. We chased a small vessel this morning supposing her to be Spanish; but she gave us the slip by running into a river on the north side of the gulf; however, had we caught her, we could have done nothing, unless it had been under Columbian Colours; and then the capture would have been at our peril. It is not long, since the general said he did not intend to hoist his new flag on board the ship till it was first victoriously displayed in his native land; and that he had no right to use the American Ensign. The latter observation convinces me of what I have long suspected, that he never had any official encouragement from our govern-

ment, though, as I have before remarked, he has frequently insinuated that the president had given more than a *tacit* sanction to his enterprise.

## LETTER IX.

*Arrival at Aruba.—Manœuvring the troops.—Remarks.*

*Leander at Aruba, April 11th, 1806.*

WE have just anchored at this island, after a much quicker passage from the Gulf of Venezuela than we had reason to expect. We had trouble in anchoring through the violent wind and bad holding ground. We find two vessels here, a brig and schooner, armed smugglers employed in the trade between the Indian coast on the Main and Jamaica; which at first fired at us, supposing we were Spaniards, till we made them understand we were friends.

The general and several officers have taken quarters on shore, and I understood our troops are to be paraded and exercised here. Having performed this work and got a few supplies, which we need, we shall proceed immediately to the land of promise.



*April 15th.* Our troops have been constantly exercising under the direction and instruction of col. Kirkland, who has brought them forward wonderfully for the short time he has had them in hand. He has great spirit of command and seems already to have communicated to these troops a good degree of martial port and feeling. They were reviewed yesterday by the general; he was highly pleased with their progress and the method of training and discipline pursued by their commanding officer. The envy that follows merit, in this as in any other service is one discouragement from being conspicuously useful, or earning distinction from the chief. His favour is expected to be a passport to fortune; and to have much of it is of course no recommendation to the good will of those, who are competitors for the same boon without the qualifications necessary to obtain it by direct means. Hence it would not surprise you to know that there are those among us who rely for favour on flattery and intrigue, rather than on their own desert; and of consequence look with an evil eye upon those, who are not obliged or inclined to pay the same price for influence. In this small society, as a sprightly au-

thor observes of a great one, that off the city of London, "there is a market for cunning" and I hope also "an emporium for honesty," but here as there

"Honest men

Are the soft easy cushions, on which knaves  
Repose and fatten."

## LETTER X.

*Departure from Aruba — Events till the arrival on the coast.--Singular order.--A great dispute.--Resignation of Lewis --The Main land in sight.--Sailors enlisted as soldiers.--Ready to land.*

*April 16th, 1806.*

WE embarked last evening and sailed this morning at day light, having in company an English schooner mounting six guns, commanded by capt. Phillips, who, the general says, will afford his assistance. To this person he has given written orders, sealed, to be opened at a suitable time, a mark of confidence to a stranger which seems a little extraordinary. A man said to be a skilful pilot to the Main, was engaged in that capacity at Aruba.

17th. The following extraordinary command was this day given out.

“ G. O. Parole, Nelson. Countersign, Trafalgar. One subaltern with side arms, to mount every morning at 11 o'clock, whose duty it will be to remain on deck, where he is to notice and report immediately to the commander in chief any thing remarkable that may take place during the day. At day light in the morning he is to call upon lieut. col. Smith, his aid-de-camp, and report to him whether any land or vessels are in sight, the situation of the vessels which accompany the *Leander*; and should any officer have any communication of consequence to make during the time he may be asleep, he begs it may be immediately communicated to his aid-de-camp, who has directions to call upon him, at all times when duty requires it.”

The original order made it the duty of the subaltern “ to observe the courses and distances of the ship throughout the twenty four hours; the direction of the wind; and to notice the working of the vessel, &c.” This Lewis ridiculed and declared it should not be put in force, which led the general to direct it to be modified as above. I thought there

would be another clashing of jurisdictions and that we should see another battle.

There is to be sure no more occasion for such an order as this, than there is to station a Catholic altar on the mast head ; and it will do as much good. With two or three exceptions, none of the subalterns know a single point of the compass, still less do they understand the management of a ship. It is the custom now, in consequence of this new regulation, to see one of our redoubtable subalterns approaching from the cabin equipped in full uniform, armed with a long rusty dragoon sabre, with a roll of paper in one hand and a pencil in the other to minute down the occurrences of the day, amidst the pointed ridicule of Lewis and his mates ; and the stifled laughter of the whole ship's crew. Still, however, the quarter master general persists in requiring this unnecessary and ludicrous duty.

*April 21st, 11 o'clock at night.* An adverse star sheds its malignant influence over our expedition ; or in plain language we have no principle of union. More rage, thunder and fury broke out this morning between the old disputants, Lewis and the general. The very ship herself trembled at the uproar ; conster-

nation, dread and dismay reigned in every countenance within her sides. We are quiet at this moment ; but Heaven only knows how long harmony, or rather smothered vengeance is to have its duration. The general is possessed with an idea that the ship has not been managed to the best advantage by Lewis and his officers, since we last put to sea. He has several times expressed his doubts to persons most acquainted with seamanship on board ; who have, I believe, treated them generally as groundless. But whenever his excellency has persuaded himself into an opinion, he is like a stream which will not roll back. Reasoning and facts are but vain breath. He has taken it into his head that he is a sailor as well as a general and a philosopher ; and he seems to think that a ship may be forced to make head way in a calm, or beat to windward with the greatest facility, against strong currents and light winds ; and because the Leander ridicules his new hypothesis in not doing either of these impossibilities, he has become impatient, ill tempered and abusive, scolding from morning till night at the poor navigators for what he calls their inattention, neglect and disaffection. In vain do they urge that the moon or trade winds im-

pel the waters to the westward ; his excellency is in a hurry to sail in an opposite course and blames the captain and mates because we do not advance in that direction ; and because they do not understand the art of obliging the wind to blow fresh in a season of the year when calms are common and to be expected.

Two days ago in the afternoon we were at no great distance from Curacoa and expected to reach Bonair in a short time ; however, that ill luck which seems always to be at our elbow, brought on a stormy night and we were frequently obliged to shorten sail ; the ship was labouring twelve hours in a heavy sea, with a strong current setting against her. Under these circumstances nothing could be expected but that the ship would drift to leeward. The next morning this was found to have been the case ; in consequence of which the general this day called a council of war to inquire into the affair. The pilot, whom we engaged at Aruba, was examined, and the opinions of major Powell and major Donahue and others were taken ; and a report was made unfavourable to Lewis. I have no doubt that a majority of the council gave their sincere opinions and gave them with delicacy and candour. I will answer

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for several of them that they are superior to malice against the captain ; and are incapable of seeking the general's favour by doing an injury to another. But in my apprehension their anxiety to reach the scene of operation and their uncomfortable situation in a crowded ship, disposing them to be impatient at any thing having the appearance of intentional neglect or delay, has warped their better judgment ; and made them censure where they should have acquitted. The only important fact in support of their sentence is that the third mate was asleep on Saturday night, when a heavy squall struck the ship and compelled her to bear away almost before the wind till the topsails could be clewed down and reefed : but during this time, she could not at the utmost have fallen to leeward more than a league. The blame here belongs to the subordinate not to the principal officer ; and it would have been very right to punish the offender severely. The current, heavy swell and the impossibility of carrying sail with safety in bad weather on a ship whose rigging is bad enough for condemnation are sufficient to account for our slow progress. An unprejudiced person, versed in navigating a vessel, would be satisfied, I think, that capt. Lewis has done his best.

As soon as our captain was informed what the general and council of war had been about in the cabin, he flew into a rage not far removed from madness; and poured out his sentiments to Miranda in the most plain and unequivocal terms, though I do not remember to have heard him make use of any ungentlemanly expression. Miranda's temper not less violent than the other's took fire, and for some minutes it was a difficult matter to hear the sound of one's own voice. Col. Armstrong endeavoured several times, and resorted to many expedients, to produce a reconciliation; but as happened before had the misfortune to involve himself still more deeply in the displeasure of both parties. In his resentment Lewis resigned his military commission; and has ceased to be any longer a colonel in Miranda's service, with which he declares he is sincerely sorry he ever had any concern; and that in future he will have nothing further to do with his excellency or his enterprise, more than to secure the interest of Mr. Ogden.

What will be the final consequence of this affair, cannot be foreseen. If Lewis chooses to revenge himself, he can do it in a sovereign degree, by objecting to the sailors leaving the



ship to become soldiers, when we reach the place of destination ; for not a man of them will stir without his consent. But I believe he will not take such a step, however he may think himself injured.

*April 22d, 9 o'clock, P. M.* The Bee has had the misfortune to spring her main mast ; but it was repaired immediately by the carpenters of our ship. Had the weather been boisterous, it is likely we should have added the loss of this vessel to our other troubles. Major Donahue was sent on board the Bacchus this morning and ordered to hasten with all dispatch to the island of Bonair with a mission from the general relating to the expedition. His object no doubt is to obtain intelligence, and particularly to see whether there are any vessels at that island, as his excellency has said that he expected one or more British frigates or a vessel of less force there, which would attend him to the Spanish Main.

*Wednesday, April 23d, 5 o'clock, P. M.* We are now laying to, off the principal town of Bonair, waiting to be joined by the Bacchus. She is coming out, and we shall hear the news in the course of an hour.

*Six o'clock.* The major has just this instant returned on board. There are no British ves-

sets in this port ; and I believe he brings no important intelligence.

*April 24th, 10 o'clock, A. M. Curacoa.* Little Curacoa, Bonair and the main land are all in sight, the weather is charming—the wind just as it ought to be for our purpose ; and we are all animation, full of business and bustle, making ready to land among the Spaniards, whom we have so long promised to visit. We have shaped our course for Ocumara, and are standing towards our destined port under easy sail. The English schooner which joined us at Aruba, finding that we did not proceed to the Main as soon as we expected, has left us. The general says that capt. Phillips had only consented to accompany him on condition that we should make an attempt to land in eight days from our leaving Aruba.

*April 25th.* I have before observed to you that the men are greatly attached to Lewis, and if required would obey no authority but his. Though they have submitted to be drilled as soldiers and have heretofore probably expected to bear arms on shore, yet they were never absolutely engaged for that purpose. The principal officers thought it necessary, before coming to land, to propose to these men to en-

list; but they declined, alleging that they were not bound by anything but the ship's articles. The disputes that have arisen between Lewis and the general had created in their minds a suspicion and dislike of the latter; and the many delays and disappointments we have experienced had depressed their spirits and made them indisposed or averse to enrolling themselves in Miranda's service. It seemed left to the officers to devise a method of overcoming this backwardness of the sailors and use their personal influence with them to concur, for Miranda could not or would not move first in the business though it was so indispensable and certainly would not take care of itself. He had the folly, I may almost say effrontery to maintain that there was no occasion to consult the sailors and that they might be compelled to serve on shore; which was saying that they might be compelled without the right or power to compel, or that the officers might first fight the sailors and with them, when subdued, fight the Spaniards! Major Powell suggested the plan of making the offers contained in the following proclamation, which he drew up and which, after finding that the tars would not risque their necks and the loss

of their wages as seamen of the *Leander* for nothing, the general condescended to sign. In the meantime capt. Lewis was consulted to know whether he would encourage the sailors to join the army, as it had been whispered that one of the mates had declared that not a man would leave the ship except Lewis commanded the landing. In this affair however he acted with perfect fairness and good nature; and not only gave a promise to use his influence with the crew in favour of the proposals, but performed it with more zeal than from previous events might have been expected.

### PROCLAMATION.

“ General Miranda, commander in chief of the army of Columbia, wishing to encourage the services and zeal of those of the crew of the *Leander*, who volunteer for the land service, engages to give the following bounty and reward to every man who manifests spirit and promptitude in landing and forming himself under the standard of Columbia on shore.

“ 1st. Thirty dollars per month as pay from the day of enrolment.

“ 2d. A bounty of fifty dollars per month to all those who at the close of the campaign shall receive from his commanding officer a certifi-

cate of his having distinguished himself in the service.

“ 3d. And the non-commissioned officers an additional pay and bounty in proportion.

“ 4th. And moreover desirous to provide for the continual prosperity and happiness of all those, who shall distinguish themselves; to every man who wishes to return to his family, a gratuity proportioned to the fidelity and courage he shall have testified.”

*On board the Leander, at sea,*

*the 25th of April, 1806.*

(Signed)

FRAN : DE MIRANDA.

When this paper had been prepared in the cabin, it was handed to capt. Lewis on deck, who read and explained it to the crew; however they still held back. The officer then, commanding the regiment in which they were to be placed, and in whose favour they were very much prepossessed, addressed them in language adapted to their capacities. He stated the favourable chances and prospects of the service for which they were required, and assured them that he would accept no compensation for his own services, until he first saw all the promises contained in the proclamation

just read to them fulfilled. By this time they were generally prepared to accept the offers made to them. Their names were successively taken down ; many of them immediately subscribed to the oath of fidelity, and the rest followed in the course of the day. Seventeen only including officers remained to manage the ship. This number, deducted from that of our crew and added to those before attached to the army, makes our efficient force consist of about one hundred and eighty three souls including persons of every description.

Not much now remains to be done, before we shall be entirely prepared to attempt our long projected landing.

*Six miles from the shore of Ocumara, 6 o'clock, P. M.* The following order is just issued. We are in high spirits ; we shall land this night and enter upon our new destinies.

“ G. O. The officers and soldiers of the Columbian army, are to hold themselves in readiness to land at a moment's warning, on the ship's arrival in port, which is expected to be this evening.”

*By order of the Commander in Chief.*

(Signed)

B. ROORBACH,

*Major of Brigade.*

## LETTER XI.

*The Leander attacked by two Spanish Guarda Costas. — The schooners Bee and Bacchus captured. — Rencontre with them. — Lewis not to blame for the loss of the schooners. — Names of the officers and men captured. — Discovery of the want of water. — Shape our course for the island of Bonair. — The officers entertain suspicions of their chief. — They have private consultations. — Conduct of the general in the action and subsequent council of war and their determination. — Reflections, &c.*

*Leander, at sea, May 6th, 1806.*

WE are ruined. We have been obliged to leave the Main without landing; and what is infinitely worse, to leave a large part of our people and associates in the hands of the Spaniards. Our motions were watched by two Spanish guarda costas, who gave us battle and have succeeded in capturing our schooners with nearly sixty of our men and officers, and a large quantity of arms and ammunition. Thus are we involved in disgrace and defeat, attended with the keenest aggravations. Well may the Spaniards triumph over us baffled and

confounded as we have been in the very outset. Miserable infatuation that brought us here to prove our improvidence and weakness. God have mercy on our captured friends, beguiled by misplaced confidence to their ruin, destined probably to drag out a wretched existence in slavery, or meet an ignominious death.

I could not write before ; this dreadful affair has kept me silent ; I will now endeavour to give you a relation of our misfortune.

At six o'clock in the morning, on the 27th of last month, we saw two strange vessels standing along the land. The general thought proper to give them chase ; as soon as they discovered us making after them, they crowded sail and run for the shore. At ten o'clock, A. M. we gave over the chase, hauled close to the wind and stood off from the land ; at this time we were about twenty miles distant from Porto Cabello. Regardless of those two vessels, which were a brig and schooner, we began at meridian to make the necessary preparations for landing at night. The Bee and Bacchus were both laying to, with their boats out, for the purpose of conveying the troops, arms, &c. on board. These small vessels, on account



of their little draught of water, were to be employed to land the detachment. While we were thus busied, the two vessels before mentioned, and which we found to be guarda costas, about two leagues and a half distant, were seen, endeavouring apparently to get up with us ; this was at three o'clock in the afternoon. Our boat, which had been carrying arms to the schooners, was instantly hoisted in ; the other boats ordered back to their respective vessels, and the ship cleared for action. Though some doubts had been started, it was the general opinion that these vessels were Spaniards ; and that they could if disposed get within gun shot of us, in the course of the night. But the general continued in the resolution of effecting an immediate landing if possible. To this end, after sun set, we stood in for the place at which the debarkation was to have been made, at no great distance from Porto Cabello ; but our design was frustrated by the pilot. He mistook the intended spot, owing to the darkness of the night, and the similitude of the mountains and land marks along the coast. At the discovery of this mistake major Powell and major Donahue went on board of the Bacchus, in order to reconnoitre the shore, and to find the place,

proposed for landing the troops. Whether they were ordered on this duty by the general, or volunteered their services I know not ; but certain it is, that the affair terminated very differently from our expectations. It was supposed that they could soon find the spot, or discover the pursuit to be vain ; and that they would not be more than an hour or two absent. At the expiration of this time signals of recall were made, and frequently repeated through the night ; but, unfortunately, they were either not seen or not attended to.

About midnight the Spaniards were again seen ; and signals were perceived passing between them and the fort of Porto Cabello. Our crew were kept at quarters all night and ready for action in the morning. Before sunrise our enemies hoisted Spanish colours ;—we hoisted none—however, the American jack was flying as a signal for the two schooners to keep close to the *Leander*. At a quarter past 8, A. M. one of the Spaniards, (the brig) opened a fire upon the *Bacchus*, then close in shore under a heavy press of sail, which soon afterwards she took in, and anchored. This was a matter of surprise to every body—but partic-

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ularly to Lewis, who could not imagine the meaning of so strange conduct at such a time.

At 11. A. M. the sea breeze favouring us, we bore down on the enemy and commenced firing from our starboard guns. Both vessels instantly opened upon us; but we were too far apart, either to receive or do any material damage. The action, or rather skirmish lasted only thirty four minutes. Our men were spirited, and gave three cheers, on being told by Lewis that the general would give them the enemy's vessels, if they acted like brave fellows; meaning that none of the officers should share in the prize money. We sustained but little injury from the fire of the Guarda Costas. The enemy endeavoured to avoid close action; had they shortened sail to let us come up, it was captain Lewis' intention to board the moment a chance offered; but neither of them would show an opportunity. This induced him to stand off from them, with the appearance of running, supposing that they would follow us, and as they would probably have separated in the chase, it would have given us the advantage of engaging singly; but they perceived our design, and instead of pursuing us, they made for our schooners, then at too great

a distance, as they had borne away to escape, to be protected by the *Leander*; and we were doomed to the inexpressible anguish of seeing our friends fall captive into the hands of enemies, from whom they could hope for no mercy; and ourselves, though ready to encounter every risk, deprived of all power to afford them relief or attempt their rescue.

Perplexity and distress ensued in our ship. What shall be done was the question?—"What say you captain?—what say you general?"—various persons were consulted, and it was soon determined, to stand off, and I believe for good reasons; if it was any object to save ourselves. No doubt this conduct will be pronounced cowardly; but hardiness is not courage. Had we pursued the Spanish vessels, sailing much faster than we, they would undoubtedly have run into port, where we could not follow them without being cut to pieces by the guns of the fort. If it was proper for us to engage them, double in force to us as they were, still we could not do it without their consent, and this they had evinced, by their making off, that they would not give. They were content with capturing our schooners, on board of which, they had seen many of our men and

arms carried, supposing, that in accomplishing this, they could entirely frustrate our design, without risking an encounter with the *Leander*. The misfortune is to be ascribed to the commanders of the schooners not observing or not obeying the signals made for their government. They were ordered to stay by the *Leander*; had they done so, she would have been victorious or would have shared their fate, whatever it might have been.

As the landing did not take place, it is impossible to say, what would have been the result, judging from all circumstances, I apprehend it would have been disastrous. The plan of our operations as explained to me, was that a detachment of a hundred men or more, under majors Roorbach and Powell should first go on shore; and the general and remainder of the force should stay on board, till the fate of the first party should be known. The precise place fixed upon for landing was not pointed out to any but the commanders; but it was said to be one side of a fort near Porto Cabello; which our troops were to attempt to take on the land side, if found vulnerable there; but if this would not do, they were to leave the fortress and make for the interior, in expecta-

tion of being joined by the inhabitants, or reaching the patriots, always declared by the general to be embodied under Don Pedro Minto. You have below\* a list of the names of the officers and men captured in the schooners, and probably you may know some of these unfortunate victims of this ill-fated expedition.

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*\*Officers.*

Majors Powell,  
                   Donahue,  
 Capt's. Durning,  
                   Billop,  
       Mr. Lippencott,  
 Lieut's. Farquharson,  
                   Moore,  
                   Sullivan,  
       Mr. Negus,  
 Lieut's, Shannon,  
                   Hall,

*Privates.*

Benjamin Nicholson,  
 Robert Rains,  
 John Hays,  
 George Furguson,  
 William Long,  
 F. Riggers,  
 Elisha King,  
 Samuel Price,  
 John Burk,

*Officers.*

Capt's. Gardner,  
                   Burgudd,  
                   Heckle,  
                   Huddle,  
 Lieut's. Johnson,  
                   Ferris,  
                   Kemper,  
                   George,  
                   Ingersoll,  
                   Gill,  
                   Saunders,

*Privates.*

William Burnside,  
 John Pompey,  
 William Pride,  
 James Grant,  
 Thomas Burlingham,  
 Robert Stephens,  
 John Scott,  
 David Shenton,  
 Alexander Bucchannan,

There were about seven privates whose names I do not know. A son of capt. Heckle twelve years of age was in the same vessel with his father. Huddle, Lippencott and Negus belonged to the Bee, captain, supercargo, and mate.

The thought of these men, in spite of attempts to appear at ease, lies heavy on my spirits. I revolve the fate of major Powell particularly with grief. He was one of the most amiable of men ; by heart, mind and manners, qualified to be loved and esteemed. Amidst all the scandal and ill will among us, I never heard a mouth open against him. What sad intelligence awaits his friends and relatives at home ? There is no peril which we would not encounter to rescue our comrades ; but what can we do ?

The day after the encounter (April 29th,) it appeared that we were exposed to a new and

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F. W. Raymond,  
Joseph Bennet,  
Daniel McKey,  
M. Smith,  
Henry Sperry,  
John Edsell

Mathew Bucchannan,  
Benjamin Davis,  
John Parsells,  
Stephen Burtis,  
Peter Naulty,

unexpected evil. There was but a single cask of water on board and we were reduced to an allowance of a pint per man.\*

It was necessary to seek a port for a fresh supply, and we steered for Bonair; where having a good wind, we fortunately arrived that very night, or we should soon have found ourselves escaped from the sword to perish by thirst.

Having remained at Bonair a short time, to get a few necessaries, we set sail, and have been at sea since the first of this month, aiming for the island of Trinidad.

Whilst we lay at Bonair the officers had much private consultation with one another concerning what could or should be done. Almost every individual seemed impressed with an idea that our leader had deceived us, as well as himself; I have no doubt but some thought of refusing submission and putting themselves and the ship under some other command; but the hazards of the attempt appeared too serious. We could not but feel disgusted and incensed that Miranda should lead us headlong into danger



\* It was not till the time of the action that we discovered our water was so nearly exhausted.



and destruction, which he ought to have foreseen or known. There could be no doubt in his mind, before we left St. Domingo, that the Spaniards were apprized of our design; and were prepared to give us a warm reception. He was disappointed in not having the Emperor. If she was necessary, why did he not give up his plan and make some definitive arrangements for that British assistance, which he said he could have, and indeed, which he always professed, insincerely, I now believe, to expect.

During our skirmish the general behaved with great coolness; and when entreated by his officers to go below, as on his life every thing depended, derided their fears, and kept his place on deck. After our discomfiture and retreat he was in great turmoil.—Sometimes absorbed, sometimes venting himself in bursts of execration against the captain of the Emperor—in complaint at the English for not coming to our help, and sometimes dejected. But he seemed inclined to see us as little as possible; and did not try to explain or vindicate his conduct, or enable us to understand why his schemes had been thus blasted in the bud. It gave him evident uneasiness and displeasure, when any of us, intimated a wish to hear a plau-

sible account of our disaster. He has now resumed a collected and decided manner; and speaks as though the design was still perfectly practicable and the resources for it abundant; but it had received the late check from a casualty not to be expected again. To show his confident manner, which came to him on a sudden, speaking of one of his field officers, he says, "I hope in two months to see him at the head of ten thousand men." This undiscouraged air of the general serves to keep alive the hopes of the reflecting part of our little band, that he has means to effect his object.

Two days after we sailed from Bonair, the general, who had still an idea of landing on the Main, without being reinforced, called a council of war, at which were present all the officers in his service. When they were convened, he proposed two plans for their consideration.

The first was to proceed to Trinidad for the purpose of obtaining military and naval succours; which he stated would certainly be furnished by the British to facilitate his enterprise; and also, to procure further information respecting South America.

The second proposition was to attempt an immediate landing at Coro.

The council unanimously agreed that we should proceed on our course to Trinidad, where, from the information of the general, they supposed that we should certainly obtain all the assistance necessary to effect the grand object, on which the greater part are bent. The plan of going to Coro was rejected, because it appeared probable to the council that we should again be attacked by the Guarda Costas, which it seemed likely would repair to the Gulf of Coro, under the supposition that we would attempt a landing at that place. Besides, we are so weakened by our loss, that without a reinforcement we cannot attempt any thing with the slightest prospect of success.

Until we reach our destined port, we must patiently bear a number of privations and inconveniences. We have no great supply of water, nor is that little good; we are allowanced at three pints per day each man, which at this rate will last about twenty days. Our bread, pork and beef are scarce, and by no means the best. Thus situated, you must see, that we have but a gloomy prospect in view, when you add that we have to beat against head winds and contrary currents every mile of the distance to Trinidad.

## LETTER XII.

*Undignified conduct of his excellency to one of his officers, &c.*

*May 9th, 1806.*

IT belongs to my story to relate an instance of the general's violence, that made me blush for the honour of grey hairs, learning and experience. It happened on the quarter deck in the presence of all the officers and the whole ship's crew at Bonair, two or three days after our misfortune. Stung as he is with disappointment, he might plead Orlando's excuse for something uncourteous ;

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“ The thorny point

“ Of bare distress hath ta'en from me the shew

“ Of smooth civility.”

But what I am going to relate was outrageous passion.

One of the engineer officers, having got into some embarrassment on shore, through want of money, on his return to the ship, was mentioning the circumstance to one of his companions loud enough to be heard by the general who was sitting near, and probably ruminating

on his disaster. In the course of the conversation this officer had the imprudence to utter something about, "months pay," "can't serve for nothing;" with other treasonable expressions; upon which Miranda ordered him to be silent; and not being instantly obeyed, seized him by the throat and threw him off the ship's gunnel, where he had been sitting, on one of the guns, and after repeated twirls, shakes and twists, dashed him slap on the deck. The engineer, when a little recovered from his fright, opened his mouth to this effect; "you don't mean to strike me again, I hope general," "strike you again," quoth the general, "yes by G—d I'll exterminate you; where is your respect for your general." "I have always respected you and done my duty sir," answered the trembling officer. "You have not," replied the chief, "so silence this moment sir." "I am not to be treated in this manner general; to avoid it, I will thank you for my discharge and I'll go on shore at this island." "Sirrah" exclaimed Miranda in a rage, "you shall be dismissed when I think proper, and not when you please, you are at my disposal, and I shall retain, or send you away, as it best suits my purpose." "But I have a right to leave your service," urged the

engineer, "hold your tongue sir, you have no rights here but obedience," retorted his excellency. The officer, however, insisted on his right to leave a service, in which he was ill-treated and not paid; at which the general could no longer restrain his passion; and this shameful and ridiculous affair concluded by a severe rub of his knuckles over the ridge of the engineer's nose, not a little to the annoyance of his under lip and chin.

Though I felt the utmost indignation at the sight of this outrage, yet it had so much of the ludicrous, that I could not help laughing. Imagine a short, plump, toad-fashioned man (for such was the lieut. of engineers) tumbled head over heels, and vice versa and making as many grimaces, expressive of fear and anger as a baboon thrown into the air, and you will admit, if he was not exposed to be seriously hurt, there was so much more of the comic than tragical in the exhibition, as to provoke our risibles. But neither I nor any other, could suppress a feeling of disgust and abhorrence at the want of self-command and of dignity in the commander in chief. He had cause undoubtedly to resent the language of the engineer, who was a little excited with liquor; yet the proper course

would have been to put him under arrest for trial. What security has any of us under the command of a man who can be carried away by brutal fury? God grant, we may not find ourselves at the mercy of a tyrant. If this be a specimen of his administration among the free people of Columbia, I think we shall have rights on paper and wrongs in fact.



### LETTER XIII.

*Off Margaritta.—Leander endeavours to avoid every strange sail.—Crew on short allowance.—Hardships.—Religious service on board and Miranda's conduct respecting it.*

*Leander, at sea, May 14th, 1806.*

WE begin seriously to feel the want of water and provisions, and we are obliged to use the strictest œconomy in the expenditure of both; so much so, that we commonly go to bed parched with thirst, and gnawed by hunger. The island of Margaritta is now in sight; but the current is setting so strong against us, and the wind so unfavourable, that we shall not

be able to get up with it for some time, most probably, not until we are reduced to four ounces of bread and a pint of water, if not less or even none.

There is a ship in sight to leeward, that appears to be chasing us. According to custom, we are crowding sail to get out of her reach. There can be no question but that the general is much afraid of the ships of his countrymen and their allies. We may indeed expect the worst, in the event of capture. Yet I would rather contend with double our own force, especially if the vessel were Spanish, than to be forever running away. There is no merit in the choice of this alternative; for we shall furnish on the high seas, if we continue to show our heels to every thing we see floating. We have lost more distance in trying to save ourselves from vessels seen fifteen miles to leeward, than we can gain in beating a month. The other day, (on the 7th I believe) we saw a strange sail a long way astern; and in an hour afterwards perceived she was a ship. I heard the general consulting about the propriety of a scamper; and he appealed to one of the officers, who had been accustomed to the sea, to know what he thought of the matter. "With due respect to



your excellency's opinion" said he, " we had better lay to, till the vessel comes up, and we may find her a friend ; most likely she is a British cruiser, for there are so many of them in these seas and they handle the French and Spaniards so roughly, that the latter seldom venture out. If she should turn out to be an enemy, we must fight or do the best we can." " Ah !" said the general. " And would you have us risk every thing—the life of our general—ourselves—the troops—and all, by such a rash step," inquired a very prudent officer, present at the time ; to whom the other replied—" That he magnified the danger," and added, " would you have us risk the starving of our general—ourselves—our troops—and finally lose our ship by drifting on the Spanish Main ; which must be the case, if we make a practice of scudding to leeward every time we see a fishing boat or launch." Lewis hates running and gave a look of approbation to the last speaker. However, it was determined to get out of the way ; and the captain must obey when his excellency thinks proper to order a race ; accordingly, that night we run twenty miles to leeward, to get out of the track of a

ship, which in all probability was an English cruiser, or some inoffensive trader.

*May 15th.* Our good ship is like a thief, who apprehends every person he sees may detect him. Had you been here, you would both have laughed and fretted with me, at the quandary our chief was in to day. The ship we saw yesterday pursued us several hours, fired three or four shot and hoisted several signals. All we did, was to hoist the American ensign at the mast head and run as fast as possible. Lewis would have shortened sail to let the stranger come up ; but he was overruled by the general and his advisers ; however, he put off running till the last moment ; and to satisfy the prudence of all parties, towards 8 o'clock in the evening, he threw overboard a decoying light, and altered the course of the ship. This decoying light is made of a large lantern lighted with wax candles, fixed perpendicularly upon a kind of triangle nailed to the upper edge of an half puncheon well ballasted ; and in that situation committed to the waves. Should this stratagem succeed in the present instance, the ship that was chasing us will be liable to find herself in the midst of the seven brothers, a cluster of rocks and small islands,

now about twelve miles distant. Grant that we are not absolutely ruined by this running ; it will make our passage a very long one ; but we are now used to disappointments and hardships, and almost prepared for the worst. Added to hunger and thirst, we are distressed by day with the heat of a vertical sun, and by continual calms, and the sight of land seen a week ago, from which we cannot move a mile ; and by night, tormented with flies, cockroaches and rats, of which the ship is full. I endeavour sometimes to divert my sufferings by recounting our plagues to you. I have an example of composure and application in the midst of vexations and uncertainties in col. K. who sits down calmly to his studies at eight in the morning and continues closely engaged till midnight or even later. The general also, at present, exhibits great patience and tranquillity. His temperate habits render privations of this kind less irksome to him than they are to most people.

It is in courts and palaces, among those who are surfeited with the gifts of heaven, that God is denied or forgotten. From the lap of plenteousness and pleasure the voice of murmuring arises. The toiling, suffering mariner acknowledges a supreme being. The pilgrim,

whose feet are scorched with the burning sand of the desert, and whose head throbs under the fierce beams of a vertical sun, offers prayer and praise to the benevolent author of his existence; whilst the philosopher in his easy chair, and in the abundance of a luxurious capital, refuses his homage to his maker, or doubts the goodness of his superintending providence.

A desire to sustain our fortitude, or piety, quickened by distress, has led our captain lately to revive a custom which he has always observed in former voyages, of having prayers read to his ship's company on Sundays. This service is performed by a sedate young officer on board. The general does not appear to relish this grave work. The moment the service begins, Miranda leaves the deck, and when it is ended, re-appears. Two or three officers have followed his example. Does he mean to have us understand that he has no religious faith? Does he mean by his actions to deride a disposition in his followers to worship the supreme being? I have been told that to some people he has ridiculed these things, though he has never done it in my hearing. If, as a philosopher, he deems religion false, as a politician, he should allow it to be useful. Perhaps he

thinks we are too wicked or engaged in too doubtful a cause to have a right to pray ! or he may suppose a religious sense will not tend to fit us for his purposes. This part of his conduct strikes me unfavourably.

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## LETTER XIV.

*Arrival at Grenada.—Refreshed, and sail for Barbadoes.*

*Grenada, May 28th, 1806.*

ON the 24th, at evening we saw two vessels, one a large ship, which we endeavoured to avoid by tacking ; but the next morning the same ship being found in chase of us, it was resolved to run no more. It was at length admitted, that we might as well die by sword as famine. When the ship had got nearly within gun shot, we being to windward did not bear down, and she fired upon us, but without her shot reaching us. Lewis, being persuaded she was English, hove to and she came up. Seeing a French distinguishing-vane at her mast head, we began to flutter. But on speaking us, she proved to be H. B. M.'s sloop of war

**Lily**, who had been for sometime searching for the **Leander**. The commander, captain **Campbell**, came on board to pay his compliments to general **Miranda**, and, on returning to his vessel, sent us some most necessary and most welcome supplies. It was determined that we should put into this island, where we arrived the next day. The general and suite disembarked the moment the ship anchored ; and several officers are allowed to step on terra firma and partake the comforts of the shore. You will conceive what a treat this must be after such a dreadful month as we have passed. From the hour we left **Bonair**, until we were spoken by the **Lily**, we experienced a continued series of mortifications, apprehensions and disappointments. The weather was always exceedingly hot, with light winds or calms, a current commonly setting against us ; and perpetual tacking to get out of the way of strange sails. In addition to this, we were almost in despair for the want of provisions and water. In this situation it pleased heaven to send the **Lily** to our assistance, at the instant when we had broached our only remaining cask of water and last barrel of bread.

The governor of this island, **Maitland**, has

received our chief with great politeness and hospitality, and given him encouragement to expect important assistance from the British in a second attempt upon the Spanish Main. As an earnest he is answerable for our supplies. These circumstances a little revive the spirits of our volunteers ; who had become rather sick of their undertaking and disposed to abandon Miranda.

*Leander at sea, May 30th.* Having procured supplies, we sailed from Grenada for Barbadoes. There we are told the general expects to revive his expedition and obtain funds. Several officers, whose purses through emptiness have grievously collapsed, have applied for pay, and are informed that they shall be remembered at Barbadoes.—We are under convoy of the *Lily*—an officer of which, lieut. Barclay, has come on board to pilot us into Bridgetown.

## LETTER XV.

*At Bridgetown.—Leander libelled and released.—Arrangements with Admiral Cochrane.—Lewis resigns.—Vanity and philosophy of M.*

*Bridgetown, Barbadoes, June 9th, 1806.*

WE arrived here the 6th. The rumour among us is such as to make us suppose the expedition is to raise its head again. Admiral Cochrane, who is on this station with three ships of the line and several frigates, intends to further it by putting some of his smaller vessels under the orders of Miranda. No regular troops and but few volunteers will be joined to it here ; but it is said they will be obtained at Trinidad.

15th. It is reported that though admiral Cochrane is favourable, lord Seaforth, governor of this island, and general Bowyer, commander in chief of the West India troops are not at all inclined to take up our enterprise. Twenty five or thirty volunteers have joined us here. In this number may be half a dozen gentlemen ; the rest I fear, must pass for vagabonds.

18th. Miranda has lately had another dif-



ference with Lewis. A few days ago, he pretended to have fears for the fidelity of the Leander's officers and crew ; suspecting them of a design to leave port clandestinely. To guard against this danger, an officer of the army and a lieutenant of the Lily were sent on board to take necessary measures of precaution. The sails of the Leander were unbent and stowed away—her lower yards and top gallant masts struck, and thirteen sailors, shipped at New-York, transferred to the Lily, till we should sail for Trinidad. At present this poor ship seems threatened with another more serious peril. Her innocence is brought into question, and she is libelled in the custom house. She stands accused of having been a long time engaged in an illegitimate and contraband trade—meaning the St. Domingo trade ; and since she became the reputed property of Don Francisco de Miranda, she is charged with mal-practices, in carrying arms, ammunition, naval stores, and troops to the enemies of the king of England, “ under unacknowledged colours,” thus setting a bad example to other private vessels. On these accounts the officers of the customs appear to think they ought to take her out of our pos-

session ; but whether she will be seized or not is uncertain.

19th. By good luck or good management the general has rescued his ship from the danger which hung over her. He has satisfied those concerned that he ought not to be considered as giving aid to their enemies, though he professes to be the friend of the subjects of Spain. - This is the second narrow escape of the kind, which the *Leander* has experienced. It seems to me that Miranda has not made very good arrangements, or he would not appear in so ambiguous a character to those on whom he relies for co-operation.

*Leander at sea, June 21st.* Yesterday afternoon we weighed anchor, and sailed from Carlisle bay, in company with the *Lily* and *H. B. M's. brig Express*, and a merchant schooner called the *Trimmer*.

Previous to leaving Barbadoes, a contract was entered into, between general Miranda, for the free people of South America, and admiral Cochrane as agent for his Britannick Majesty ; the basis of which stipulates, that admiral C. shall assist general M. with a certain number of vessels of war immediately, and that he shall hereafter forward such reinforcements

as he might have in his power to furnish, in case they should be wanted by Miranda ; and that in the event of our succeeding, Great Britain shall always be held by general M. and the government which he may establish, on the footing of the most favoured nations ; that importations in British bottoms shall receive a deduction of ten per cent, upon the duties paid by all other friendly nations, except the United States of North America.

This provisional agreement is to be sent to England for the approbation of his Majesty and council, and if they see fit and agree to it, the future operations of our expedition are to be carried on with the concurrence and counsel of the British cabinet. How this will be received at the court of St. James, it is impossible for me to say ; it appears however, that no definitive arrangements had been settled between them and our commander before, as we had once imagined and hoped. In this contract, Miranda omitted to mention the United States, notwithstanding the warm affection which he professes for our country, until the impolicy of excluding her from the mercantile advantages, which he might have the power to confer, was stated to him by one of his American officers.

Further disagreements taking place between Miranda and captain Lewis, the latter resigned the command of the *Leander* a day or two preceding our departure from Carlisle bay. All the mates, the boatswain and gunner and nearly forty of the crew left her at the same time, though not persuaded to do so, by their captain. The ship is now trusted to the management of a very inexperienced young man—whose only recommendation to such a place is his popularity with the remaining sailors. An officer, however, from the *Lily* is with us, to supply the want of our new commander's naval knowledge.

*Leander, near Tobago, June 23d.* As the cloud that hung over the expedition begins to break away, and the fortunes of the chieftain become more promising, the expectations of his officers awake, and their solicitude about the possession of his favour appear. He makes a point of saying frequently that the chance of promotion in his service depends on merit. But he is not entirely singular among men, if he allows it a great merit to be disposed to please him on any terms, and be willing to concur in his fondness of himself. Flattery and obsequiousness, with all his philosophy

can procure a passage to his heart. "When I tell him he hates flatterers ; he says he does ; being then the most flattered." Some of the most shallow and least worthy of our company, have purchased marks of the general's regard, by supplying the cordial of adulation, for which he has no measured thirst. "He that will absolutely confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compass of musick." On this account I have less confidence in his promises, for promises at present are all he gives, or I suppose has to give. But when the time to remember and perform shall come, and rival claims to place shall be set up, he may be expected to decide in favour of those, who have soothed his vanity. At the same time he is a great moralist or moralizer. Vice and meanness in every degree and shape are, according to his own declarations, entirely *against his taste and judgment*. If you take his word for it, he is a lover of virtue even to enthusiasm. He is always inveighing against dissimulation and injustice, and extolling sincerity and disinterestedness—All the virtues are the themes of his encomiums. To use his own language, he

“abominates tyranny ; hates fools ; abhors flatterers ; detests pride ; and laments the diabolical corruptness of modern days. He loves freedom ; admires candour ; esteems wise men ; respects humility ; and delights in that noble and beautiful integrity and good faith which distinguished the golden times of antiquity.” He speaks with great freedom and asperity of the faults of the different learned professions. According to him, “priests are hypocrites ; lawyers, sophisters ; and doctors, pretenders ; and virtue has fled this detestable world ; he would lay down a refined philosophy, which should have for its object the reformation of abuses ;” and finally, he “would renovate the perverted minds of mankind, restore the ancient beatitude, when every excellence and virtue prevailed among men, for the happiness of the present race, and the perpetual prosperity of future generations.” All this is to be realized in South America.

Miranda is no doubt sincere in these notions of perfectibility. Yet one would think the French experiment should make a wise man pause. This seems to be no other than the wild philosophy, which erected the reign of blood and terror on the ruins of monarchy, and

supplied the thirsty guillotine and more thirsty sword with innocent victims. If such scenes are to be acted in South America, I shall have done with the revolutionizing philosopher. The engagements, by which we are bound to him, make it at present, next to impossible to get away ; and the cause has acquired so much appearance of respectability and such means of success by the juncture of British force, that I resolve to continue, though I cannot say without some reluctance.

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## LETTER XVI.

*At Trinidad.—Officers and men engaged there.  
—General order.—Capt. Johnson.—Foolish  
handbill.—Departure.*

*Port of Spain, Trinidad, July 14th, 1806.*

ON the 24th of last month we arrived at this island. The affairs of the expedition are in such train that it will undoubtedly proceed. It is to be assisted by English supplies and naval force, though by no regular troops. The British authority here have perhaps not sufficient confidence in the plan to give it this aid;

and if they were disposed, could not do it without disobliging extremely the French and Spanish party here, which is numerous and influential. The inhabitants, being chiefly of these nations, it is not easy to get men to enlist. Notwithstanding this, seventy or eighty volunteers have been recruited; and during the week to come, which is to be spent here, this number may probably be doubled. Between twenty and thirty persons have been added to the service as officers. A few of them are respectable men; but the greater part are low or worthless characters; such as I think Miranda's dear countrymen will not be likely to deem an acquisition. The principal and most respectable persons are William Gage Hall, with the rank of colonel of engineers; count de Rouvray, colonel; Chevalier Loppentot, captain of horse; James Adrien, interpreter and officer of engineers; and two Spaniards ranking as colonels; Trelawney de Belhay, chief de equadron, Phillip Nihil, 1st lieutenant, Alexander Bruce, do. Samuel W. Walcott, do. Charles Carrington, do. Isaac Robinson, do. Le Frecier Loppentot, aid de camp to the chief, Daniel Crone 1st lieut. De Sine, do.—Robert Roscow, do. Horace Hathaway 2nd



lieutenant of artificers—and Robert Mc Culagh, do. in the rifle corps.

*July 17th.* The general order of this day contained the following gracious words ;—

“ Whilst the commander in chief sees with regret the inconveniences the officers and soldiers suffer by being so much longer confined on board ship, than could possibly have been expected, he begs leave to remind them that one of the first qualities of a soldier is to bear with patience the unavoidable deprivations to which a military life is subject ; and at the same time, assures them that he will always bear in mind what they have suffered, and as far as in his power, study to relieve them.” \*

Though this condolent address was put in the orderly books, I suppose not ten of Miranda's followers heard of it. As the first expression of his regard, since our misfortune, it deserves to be noticed. Were it however known to all, it would not do much to reinstate him in the affections of his volunteers, especially those who left New-York with him. They think him a hard and unfeeling master, I do not remember that he has ever made a personal address to them, even when in the most trying circumstances. He has appeared insens-

ble to their sufferings, and careless of their wants. If he could not give them good fare, they would naturally expect good words; or some attempt to soothe and encourage their disappointed and dejected minds. They know and feel that he has been false; though all of us, who reflect, are sensible that his sanguine temper has deceived him. We are just on the point of sailing for the land of promise; yet many of us, I am persuaded, would be glad to wash our hands of this business. But we are among strangers without resources. We have engaged ourselves to Miranda for two campaigns, let what will happen;—we are not permitted to resign; though really we are absolved by his neglect to fulfil his part of the contract.

The young man, who I sometime ago told you commanded the *Leander*, has been removed; and is succeeded by a captain Johnson, who came to this island from Barbadoes on purpose to obtain the place he now holds. This man was exceedingly ambitious of his present situation. He expressed a willingness to hazard some of his cash to aid the enterprise, if it would procure him a command. By some means these glad tidings came to the general,

whose funds are quite low, and Johnson did not long wait for the appointment, to which he aspired.

*July 21st.* With a view to induce people to join us, the general, or some one about him has issued the following curious and foolish hand bill, which has been circulated through the town and stuck up in all publick places. It purports to be an address from Miranda to the Spanish people here.

*“ Friends and countrymen,*

“ The glorious opportunity now presents itself, of relieving from oppression and arbitrary government, a people who are worthy of a better fate ; who ought to enjoy the blessing of the finest country in the universe, which bountiful providence has given them ; but who are shackled by a despotism too cruel for human nature longer to endure. Groaning under their present afflictions, they hail with extended arms the noble cause of freedom and independence, and call upon you to share with them in the god-like action of relieving your distressed fellow creatures. Hasten then to join the standard of *one*, who has the happiness to call himself your countryman, and is determined to rescue his country, and to shed the last drop

of his blood in promoting its happiness : An object, of which he has never lost sight for a moment of his life.”

“ There will be made a liberal distribution of land at the expiration of a twelve month, according to rank; and privates, from the instant of enrolment, will be entitled to provision and clothing, with a quarter dollar per day as pay, not subject to any deductions.

“ And you, brave volunteers of the island, who have nobly come forward to partake with us our honours, and to share with us our prosperity, hasten to follow those officers, under whose care you have been already trained, and who are impatient to lead you on to victory and *wealth*.

The gulf that Columbus first discovered and honoured with his presence, will now witness the illustrious actions of your gallant efforts.”

This thing excites nothing but ridicule, and the officers are disgusted with it. The general disowns the sublime production. There can be no doubt, I think, it was issued with his knowledge and sanction. He recollects, perhaps, that he has already promised the men in the service thirty dollars per month, which is four times more than is now offered to new re-

cruits, except the "distribution of land" after "twelve months." He reflects also that it is no proof of his caution, to point out the place of his intended landing in an island, where there is a constant communication with the Spanish Main.

*July 25th.* At length we have weighed anchor and bent our course for the land we are to deliver. We are in the gulf of Paria about fifteen miles from the port of Spain, becalmed. With the first fair wind we shall run through the Bocas. The maledictions of many and the blessings of few attend us from Trinidad, where we were far from being popular; though individuals of us experienced great hospitality and kindness from some of the inhabitants. The troops in general, are in full hopes of success. Miranda, says again, excepting the dangers of the sea, it is infallible. From the smallness of the force with which he proposes to enter the country, it is evident he must have great dependence on the readiness and the ability of the inhabitants to join his standard. The number of our force, including the officers and sailors who will land from the ships, does not exceed four hundred. The squadron consists of the *Leander*, 16 guns, *Lily*, twenty

**Our, Express, twelve, Attentive, fourteen, Provost, ten; Bull-dog, Dispatch, Mastiff, gun-boats of two and three guns; Trimmer and Commodore Barry, unarmed merchantmen.**

The general with his suite, &c. sails in the **Lily**. He has taken another secretary, called **private secretary**, by name **Fitzwilliam**, who is said to be a man of talents and information.

There are but few who know to what port we are destined, or I suppose will know till we are near it. I shall probably write no more till there is some crisis in our affairs.



## LETTER XVII.

*Landing on the main.--Result.*

*Leander at sea, August 1st, 1806.*

WE are again disappointed and confounded. The dream called an expedition has vanished; all our anxiety, trouble and enterprise have come to nothing; our big expectations and lofty hopes have fallen to the ground. We have visited the Spanish Main, had possession of La Vela de Coro, the city of Coro, and other places; all of which we have just evacuated;

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The Spaniards would have nothing to say to us. They had no thoughts of accepting our proffer of liberty; and we could not oblige them to take it. Miranda, so long the idol of his foolish followers, is not known by them. They wondered who he was; and what brought him in such guise into their country. They viewed him as a marauder whom they were to fly from, or destroy, instead of a deliverer to be made welcome. There was no sign of any partisans of his in force or likely to be so; and not a shadow of probability that any one of the leading officers of government civil or military had thought or would think of adopting his plans or joining his standard. Having left the country, we are going—I know not whither—but wherever the prince of visionary schemers chooses to say. You will imagine my disgust and mortification; perhaps repentance. For I assure you, it is not without compunction that I reflect how we have terrified and harrassed the unoffending people of this region, as the event has proved, without sufficient pretence, and to no good purpose. I should pity our fanatical leader more than all, but he has an adnot exe constitution for bearing mortifications. sists of orders do by no means put him out of

countenance. I dare say he will soon talk of beginning again without any confusion of face. Indeed he has reason to believe he may go any length in amusing our expectations, considering how fond of being deceived we have appeared. It is said we are going to the island of Aruba. Under the next date, you shall have the history of our recent performances and mishaps.

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## LETTER XVIII.

*At Aruba.--Events after leaving Trinidad.--  
Army disembark.--Gain Le Vela de Coro.--  
March to Coro.--Disaster at that place.--  
Return, and evacuation of the Main.*

*Aruba, August 15th, 1806.*

WE anchored at this place yesterday ; and I now proceed to the relation of what has happened from the time of leaving Trinidad.

On the 23d and 24th of July, all the officers and men belonging to the Columbian Army embarked on board the vessels mentioned before. The Sunday following passing by the island of Margaritta—the people forsook the church, and manning the batteries of the place



discharged several shots at our squadron without injury. We anchored and went ashore at the island of Coche where we remained one night. At day light on the 2d of August through a mistake of the pilot we anchored within nine miles of La Vela de Coro on the west side of the bay, instead of anchoring within reach of the batteries as was intended.

Pursuant to the following general order\* the



\* The right hand cypher in the following estimate of numbers was added to deceive the enemy, in case they should ever see the order. Our force is what remains when the cypher is cut off. viz. Two hundred and ninety one.

*On board of the Lily, August 1st. 1806.*

"G. O." "As it is intended that the army shall disembark in the course of this night, the following order is to be attended to

1st division under the command of col. Compte de Rouvray, Hulans,	350
Guides with captain Sanchez and Cayetana,	150
Detachment of the royal Navy under Lieutenant Beddingfield,	810
Trinidad volunteers under colonel Downie,	320
Spaniards and Indians in the gun-boats,	300
2d division under the command of lieut. col. Kirkland,	
1st regiment of North American volunteers,	660
Engineers under captain Allison,	100
Artillery under captain Lowdon,	270

first division under the command of col. count de-Rouvray, disembarked from the squadron in the boats, with a view to effect an immediate landing; but a gale of wind set in nearly as soon as all the necessary preparations were made; and obliged the row boats and barges to be taken in tow by the gun boats, in which situation they remained the whole day, unable

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"Captain Campbell of his majesty's ship Lily will give the necessary orders for the distribution of the boats; and the commanding officer of each detachment will take care that a proper proportion of officers is sent in each boat.

This order of debarkation, was accompanied by the following instructions:

"G. O." "Parole, Columbia. Countersign, Victory.

*"Order of Attack.*

"As soon as the first division, under the command of col. Compte de Rouvray, has disembarked a sufficient number of troops, he will attack the battery of the punta, in conjunction with the detachment from the navy. Having carried that, he will leave it in possession of a detachment of the navy; and then proceed with the rest of the troops and take possession of the custom house and enemy's artillery near it, where he will leave the remainder of the naval detachment; and then proceed on the road leading to the town of Coro, where he will halt until informed of the landing of the 2d division.

"After receiving this information, he will proceed and

to gain the point of attack on account of the roughness of the sea and the violence of the wind. The principal part of the second division, under Kirkland were at this time on board the *Leander*, as the boats of the squadron were not sufficient to disembark both divisions at once. This occasioned a transfer of his troops to his majesty's ship *Bacchante* (captain Da-

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take possession of the town of Coro, on the supposition that he will be supported by the 2d division.

"The naval detachment, charged with the care of the battery and town of Vela de Coro, will take care to send piquets on the roads leading into town, with orders not to allow any person to go out without a pass from the commanding officer; and any person coming in, to be strictly examined and acknowledged as a friend.

"A piquet of Indians under the command of capt. Leon, is to be posted on the road leading to Paraquana. Every species of plundering, is in the most positive terms prohibited; and the general expects that every person composing this army, will conduct himself to all such of the inhabitants as appear friendly, in such a manner, as will conciliate their affections; and only treat as enemies all such as appear in arms, and make resistance.

"The proclamation and pamphlets attached to them to be placed and distributed in every conspicuous place; by the commanding officers of the different detachments, agreeable to the ninth article of the same. All reports to be

ores) where they remained until day light the next morning. The Bacehante got under weigh and beat up nearly abreast the strongest fort of La Vela de Coro during the night; the brigs Attentive and Express and the gun boats also stationed themselves within point blank shot of the same place.

On the morning of the 3d, the first division landed and were soon followed by the second, which would have arrived at the same time, had not the want of boats rendered it impossible. Whilst the troops were advancing

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forwarded to the head quarters of the army at La Vela de Coro. As it will in the course of a day or two, be easy to get any thing that may be wanted from on board the fleet, no baggage of any kind is to be carried on shore at the time of embarkation. Each man may carry on shore with him two or three biscuits.

"Lt. col. Roorbach is to join the detachment under the command of Lt. col. Kirkland, and to duty with it until further orders.

(Signed)

WM. ARMSTRONG,

Q. M. General.

\* \* This order of attack, is to be executed, as nigh as possible, conformable to the preceding mode laid down; should circumstances oblige any officer to deviate from it, he is to do it, with the utmost circumspection and caution."

in the boats, they were covered by a warm fire from the armed vessels of our squadron against the forts, which the latter promptly returned, but without effecting any considerable injury. As they approached the land, the Spaniards began a smart, though ill directed fire of musketry from the bushes, which lined the whole extent of the beach. As the troops leaped from the boats, the Spaniards retreated farther into the bushes, where they were closely pursued by a party of our men, with whom, for a few moments, they maintained a scattering fire. While this party engaged these fugitives, who soon dispersed, another party pressed on to the nearest fort, which stands upon the margin of the bay. This was entered by the hulans and marines, sword in hand, the Spaniards leaping the walls on the opposite side and flying in all directions. The guns of of this fortification, on its coming into our possession, were immediately pointed against the town, custom house and magazine, distant about a quarter of a mile, where the main body of the Spanish force was stationed with nine or ten pieces of artillery (4 and 6 pounders.) They were, however, soon compelled to retreat, and in such precipitation and confusion,

that they spiked but few of their cannon, and even left two of them loaded. So far we had none killed and only three wounded, one of which only is considered in danger.

Thus, on the third day of August, the rising sun witnessed a display of the Columbian colours on the staff, which the Spanish royal standard had so long occupied. The inhabitants of all descriptions had fled principally the day before, taking with them the greater part of their moveables. Our delay of the attack, in consequence of anchoring in the wrong place, gave them time. Flags of truce, with messages of peace, and assurances of protection both to person and property were immediately dispatched about the town and its environs, soliciting the fugitive inhabitants to return to their homes; but either through the order of government, or affright, some old women only and a few men could be induced to accept the invitation.

General Miranda reached the shore at half past eleven, A. M. His arrival was retarded by the circumstance of the *Lily* having anchored nine miles to leeward of the town, which prevented both her and the *Leander* from sharing in the attack. Between nine and

ten at night, our force headed by the general began to march for the town of Coro, which lies about twelve miles to the westward of La Vela; and arrived there an hour before day dawn on the fourth. The march was conducted with so much order and silence, that the footsteps of the troops were scarcely heard. The morning was unusually serene and pleasant. A most solemn, or rather dreadful stillness pervaded the whole place. The city as we soon found, was entirely evacuated except by a few women, superannuated devotees, and perhaps a small body of armed men, left to guard the jail; for it remains in some doubt, whether there was this force. If they were there, they escaped, for we took no prisoners under arms. Having passed through several streets we arrived at the public square. On one side of this square, in front of the troops as they marched in, are the jail and council house; opposite to these is a large church. The other sides are occupied by public buildings of different descriptions. When the head of the column entered the public square, general Miranda, preceding the right of the first division, attended by some of his principal officers advanced to the grand

avenue leading to the jail and council house. In the mean time the second division had chiefly gained the opposite side, and were forming in front of the church. At this moment a tumultuous and disorderly fire commenced from the first division. Most of the officers assert that some guns were first discharged from the windows of the jail, but in this they are not unanimous. It is admitted by all that the hulans, marines, and Trinidad infantry (under Downie) who were in advance of the other troops and by this time, at halt, near the prison, fired, not only towards the prison; but also on the infantry and artillery who were posted behind them, before and near the church. The latter presumed they could receive such a salutation from none but Spaniards, and took the firing for a commencement of the enemy's attack, imagining that the jail was a barrack, for which, in the dark it might be mistaken, and that the enemy was assaulting them from within and behind this building. Without waiting for orders, upon perceiving the fire from that quarter, the infantry returned it with vigor. The clamour of fifty voices was instantly raised, commanding the men to cease firing. This clamour, with the cries of the



wounded, the flight of the Indians, who had joined us at La Vela de Coro; the breaking of ranks, &c. made a scene of confusion and tumult not to be described. After a few minutes the firing was silenced; but not until col. Kirkland, (whose utmost exertions to prevent this confusion, from extending to his division had proved ineffectual) the general's private secretary and five men were wounded and one man was killed. No one seems able to give a satisfactory account of this miserable affair. It appears in the garb of a shameful and sorrowful blunder of some body; but the responsibility cannot be charged upon any particular individual. The general and the officers under whose eye the firing began, give no account of the matter, as far as I can learn, either, because they cannot, or will not explain it. Indeed they observe a silence upon the subject that seems almost studied. One solution is, that there was a small guard of Spaniards, who discharged their muskets upon us from the jail windows; and that the hulans and marines, upon the report of these pieces, through agitation and surprise, fired in different directions. But the jailer steadfastly denied that he had any guard. If there was

one it escaped, for, as it has been already observed no Spanish soldiers fell into our hands.\* The other explanation is more probable. Many of the men in the advanced guard assert that they were ordered to fire by Miranda. They say that the general, exulting in his easy possession of the city, wished to regale his ears with the military sound of a *feu de joie*; and consequently ordered the men nearest him to commence the musick. Our troops, being composed of men of various nations and languages, the command was not fully understood by all. Hence some, supposing the firing was intended to be serious, not sportive, discharged in a horizontal position, aiming at those, who might be their enemies, whilst those who comprehended the order, pointed their guns in the air.

When Miranda appeared before the prison, it was opened to him. He entered unarmed, and received the keys from the keeper, who, at the same time informed him, that the

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\* The opinion that the firing began with one of our men shooting down another, said to be at the prison door, is certainly incorrect. The first report was of many pieces, not a single one.

constituted authorities had obliged all the inhabitants to abandon the town. Upon this, while standing in the jail entry, he proclaimed to the jailor, his attendants and the prisoners that they were free, the latter shouted vive Miranda ! at the same moment it is said the general directed the troops near him to let off the *feu de joie* that proved so unseasonable and so fatal.

Agreeably to this proclamation of liberty, all the debtors were immediately liberated from their confinement. The criminals, who had considered themselves included in the annunciation of freedom, wished to know why their fetters were not taken off, and their doors unbolted. Miranda replied, that he came not to break but to maintain their laws under a more equitable and rational government : this answer no doubt unexpected, was more just than satisfactory to the felons.

Col. Kirkland received two musket balls Sparrough the left thigh, just below the femoral artery, at the instant he was forming his division in front of the jail. The misfortune of this gallant officer was lamented by the army in general ; and especially by the troops under his immediate command, who regard him with the highest confidence and affection, and would follow him into

any peril. Much was expected from his activity and military talents in the late critical posture of our affairs. The wound, which he bore with fortitude and cheerfulness, is dangerous, though we hope not mortal. Mr. Fitzwilliam was wounded in the arm near the shoulder, and though in great pain will probably recover. The man killed was a black, born in New-York, who had been cook of the ship. This unfortunate fellow, was with difficulty persuaded to engage in the land service ; he predicted his fate, by saying as he left the ship " I know I shall get killed if I go."

We remained five days in the city of Coro. In this interval, the same means that had been used at La Vela, to bring in the inhabitants were again employed ; but with as little success. The people had been compelled to abandon their homes by the positive orders of the commandant, who threatened to make severe examples of those who remained behind, if they ever fell into his hands again. The priests too instructed the inhabitants of this province, that it had been invaded by a band of lawless hereticks and infidels, who came not only to rob them of their property, but also to deprive their souls of salvation, by spreading

damnable tenets and principles among the favorites of the Holy Virgin. Whilst remaining here, we frequently beat to arms upon an alarm of an approaching enemy, and marched out with our artillery among the prickly pears and bushes which surrounded the place ; but returned as safe as we went out.

On the night of the 9th we took up our march, it being reported that we were going to attack Bona Vista ; and in the morning found ourselves again in La Vela de Coro. In the preceding operations, the forts were first attacked by less than ninety men ; and we were only two hundred and sixty four strong, all included, when we entered the city of Coro. From the best information we could get, the number of Spanish force at Vela de Coro at the time of our attack was from five to six hundred, and about fifteen pieces of ordinance were on the several batteries. The vigour of our assault in some measure confounded the enemy. Our fatigue prevented any pursuit ; and consequently we obtained no prisoners.

The following is a translation of the proclamation alluded to in the general order of debarkation,

## PROCLAMATION.

**Don Francisco de Miranda, commander in chief of the army of Columbia, to the inhabitants of Columbian America:—**Brave countrymen and friends—obedient to your wishes, and to the repeated requests and calls of the country, to whose service we have cheerfully consecrated the greater part of our lives; we have disembarked in this province of Caraccas. The opportunity and time appear to us highly favourable for the completion of our designs; and all persons composing this army are your friends or countrymen; all resolved to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, for your liberty and independence; under the auspices and protection of the British navy. With these auxiliaries, we can safely say, that the day will come, when our America, recovering her sovereign independence, her sons will be able freely to shew to the universe their exalted spirit. The oppressive, unfeeling government, which has obscured our finer qualities, and blackened with calumnies our deference and character, managed also to maintain her abominable system of administration for three successive centuries; but was never able to eradicate from our hearts those moral and civil virtues, which

a holy religion and a regular code of laws incorporated with our customs, and led to an honest and natural course of action. Let us be worthy then of those admirable qualities, that the mean and odious agents of the court of Madrid being expelled, we may be able quietly to establish the civil order necessary to the completion of so honourable an undertaking. The recovery of our rights as citizens, and of our national glory as Columbian Americans, will be among the least benefits we shall derive from that so just and necessary determination. The innocent Indians and all other men will consider us all as brother citizens, and that precedence belongs only to merit and virtue; in which belief they will primarily obtain, most certainly military and civil recompenses; the reward of merit alone. If the Dutch and Portuguese were able in former times, to throw off the yoke of Spanish oppression; if the Swiss, and North Americans, our neighbours, have equally succeeded to establish their liberty and independence, with the general applause of the world, and to the benefit of their inhabitants, when each of them, separately, scarcely contained two or three millions of people; why then shall we, who are at least sixteen mil-

lions, not be able as easily to extricate ourselves? Possessing besides over and above these considerations, the most fertile, inexhaustible and rich continent in the known world! The fact is, it depends solely upon our own will; and that will, progressing to our independence, union must assure to us permanent and perpetual happiness. The Divine Providence ordains it, to alleviate the miseries of our unhappy countrymen and for the protection and benefit of the whole human species. Those people who are timorous, or less instructed, and who wish to inform themselves of the ground work, of the justice and equity which these proceedings require; joined to the historical truths that prove the inconceivable ingratitude, unheard of cruelties, and atrocious persecutions of the Spanish government towards the innocent and unhappy inhabitants of the new world, almost from the moment of its discovery, will read the subjoined address of Don Juan Viscardo, of the order of Jesus, directed to his countrymen, and they will find in it irrefragable proofs and solid arguments in favour of our cause, dictated by a holy man, at a time when he was about taking his leave of this world, to appear before the Creator of the



universe. To carry this plan into its due effect, with security and success, the citizens will be obliged, without distinction of classes or station (ecclesiastics only excepted, in the parts where they may be appointed) to conform themselves strictly to the following articles: viz.

I. Every person, military, judicial, civil or ecclesiastic, who exercises any authority granted by the court of Madrid, shall suspend, pro facto, their functions, and those, who continue after the present publication, as well as those who obey such persons shall be severely punished.

II. The ecclesiastical courts and the courts of justice, in all cities, towns and places, shall exercise, ad interim, all the functions of government, civil, administrative and judicial, with personal responsibility, and regulated by the laws of the country; and the curates of parishes and missionaries, shall remain in their respective churches and parishes without altering the exercise of their sacred functions.

III. All the ecclesiastical courts and the courts of justice, shall send one or two deputies to the head quarters of the army, in order that they may unite themselves into a general

assembly on our arrival in the capital ; and to form there a provincial government, which may lead in due time to another government general and permanent, with the consent of the whole nation.

IV. Every citizen from the age of sixteen to fifty five shall repair without fail to the army, bringing with him such arms as he may be able to procure ; and if they have none, they shall receive them from the military *depots* of the army.

V. The citizen who may have the baseness to make common cause with the agents of the Spanish government ; or who may be found with arms, encamped in any garrison, or place of strength for the said government, shall be treated as a traitor to his country. If any persons actually in the service of Spain, shall be so pusillanimous as to believe that they are in honour bound to serve against the independence of their countrymen, they shall be forever banished from the country.

VI. On the contrary, all those who are exercising any military, civil or whatever other employments, who join with promptitude the standard of the country, shall receive honours and employments proportioned to the zeal and

love of their country, which they shall have manifested in such an important conjuncture. Soldiers and sailors, shall be equally rewarded, according to their capacity and zeal.

VII. The treasurers of the publick money shall immediately deposit the same with the administrators, civil and ecclesiastick, who shall nominate persons capable of managing the same, and for the supply of the Columbian army, with whatever may be necessary to its maintenance and operations ; not only in money, but also provisions, clothing, vegetables, carriages, horses and mules.

VIII. In order to prevent any kind of insult or aggression on the part of the soldiers or advanced posts of the army ; the magistrates and parish priests of the cities, towns and villages (under their personal responsibility) shall cause the colours or ensign of the national independence to be fixed on the highest and most conspicuous parts of the churches ; and the citizens shall also wear in their hats, the cockade which denotes them to be friends to our just cause ; for without these they would not be respected and protected as brothers.

IX. This proclamation shall be fixed by the priest and magistrates on the doors of the pa-

ish churches and all publick buildings, in order that it may be speedily notified to all the inhabitants. They shall also read in the churches and all the civil courts, once a day at least, the pamphlet formerly mentioned, written by J. Viscardo, which accompanies this edict.

X. Whoever shall hinder, retard or neglect the observance of the nine preceding articles, shall be considered a publick offender, and punished immediately with exemplary severity. The publick good is the supreme law.

*Done at Head Quarters at*

*Coro, 3d of August, 1806.*

(Signed)

FRAN: DE MIRANDA.

THOMAS MOLINI, *Secretary.*

The pamphlet alluded to, was in Spanish, written twelve years ago, answering to the character given to it in the proclamation. It was designed to enlighten the people and to inspire them with a hatred of kings and love of liberty. It attempts to show how happy other countries were in self-government and how easily the South Americans might possess themselves of this same blessing.

## LETTER XIX.

*Other events previous to the evacuation of the Main.—Col. Hall's embarrassment.—Threat of M. concerning his wounded men.—Capt. Johnson's misfortune.*

*Aruba, August 17th, 1806.*

IMMEDIATELY on our return to La Vela de Coro, I learned what had happened there during our absence. No advices were sent to the commanding officer of La Vela, to acquaint him and the squadron of our having taken possession of the city, or apprise him of our situation. They were four days in a state of anxious suspense, without hearing a syllable of our fate. At the same time they were in constant apprehension of an attack from the Spaniards who were assembled in large bodies within a short distance of the town. Whether this neglect in Miranda, so vexatious to the detachment left in the rear be military or not, let military men decide.

Col. Hall, who commanded at La Vela, grew impatient to hear from the army which had gone to Coro and to put an end to his

doubts, was at last, obliged to send a messenger to his excellency. It was with the greatest difficulty, and not without ample pecuniary promises, that a native could be found who would undertake the office. For some strange reason Miranda detained this messenger so long after he was prepared to return with an answer to col. Hall, that the latter, with the remnant of our troops guarding La Vela, concluded that we were all taken prisoners, or had been put to the sword by the Spaniards. Under this impression, col. Hall thought it expedient, for the time being, to plant several pieces of cannon round the house in which he resided; and took the precaution of having boats in waiting on shore every night, to carry himself and the guard consisting of twenty five men, off to the squadron, in case they should be under the necessity of flying.

Col. Hall, who had it in charge from Miranda, to entice his countrymen back to their homes, finding his personal efforts ineffectual, addressed the following letter to the priest of that district, in hopes, by gaining the pastor to gain his flock.

*“ Reverend Father,*

*“ I take the liberty to enclose you one of*

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- general Miranda's proclamations and pamphlets, and to inform you, that I intended myself the honor of waiting on you tomorrow, to request
- that you will be so good as to come into town on Sunday next to celebrate mass. You may rely on the assurance of not being disturbed in any manner in the exercise of your holy functions. In the interval, I beg God to grant you long life and health. I kiss your hands."

This letter was written in Spanish, by lieutenant Adrien, the colonel's secretary. The day after it was delivered, this officer accompanied by Lt. Spearing and Dr. Davie, both of the British navy, waited on the curate. He replied in answer to the letter, that he could not officiate out of the district to which he belonged; but his conduct and manners, proved that this was only an excuse. He was surrounded by a multitude of people, who testified no inconsiderable alarm at the presence of our ambassadors; and hovered under the wings of his reverence, as their only safeguard from heretical contamination. The truth was, that the priest wished to have no communication with any of Miranda's followers; he knew, if he came into town, that he should be followed by

his flock ; and he therefore declined the invitation, with a plausible excuse, lest the people should attach themselves to Miranda when they had more thoroughly discovered his intentions with respect to their country. It is very evident from this, and other circumstances, that the inhabitants of this country will never listen to the proposals of our commander in chief, unless they are led on and countenanced by their priests ; and without the concurrence of the priests his cause could not succeed. These ecclesiastics have too much wisdom to give up a certainty for an uncertainty ; to espouse an adventurer and revolutionist against the reigning government, which protects their endowments and immunities, and builds up their influence ; and they have probably as a body too much loyalty of feeling and principle to be seduced by ordinary prospects into a renunciation of their allegiance.

*Aruba, August 20th 1806.*—Before we proceed to speak of our situation and prospects, I will finish the narrative of events previous to our final evacuation of the Main, which took place on the night of the 13th of this month. Before we occupied La Vela de Coro it was understood that col. Hall was to be command-



ant of that place, when it should come into our possession; but it was not officially known until the following general order\* informed us of the colonel's promotion.

On our march from the city of Coro, our chief exhibited conduct that left a strong impression of his inhumanity upon our minds. Desperate ends require desperate means. Shall the maker

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“ *La Vela*, 10th August, 1806.

“ G. O. Parole ———, Countersign ———;  
Col. William Gage Hall, was on taking possession of this place, appointed commandant, but owing to the movement of the troops, could not before this, be put in orders. He is now to be respected as such, and all rules and regulations made by him, for the interior economy of the garrison are to be strictly obeyed and respected.”

The conclusion of this order will appear to you sufficiently pompous when you recollect that it was addressed to no more than about thirty officers, and less than three hundred men; who composed a mixture of every age, shape, condition, size and language.

“ A gun will fire, as usual at day light, when the reveille is to beat, bugle to sound, and colours to be hoisted. Troop to beat at eight o'clock, when the regiments and corps are to parade; arms to be examined and guards to mount. An evening gun will fire at sunset, when the troops are to parade; piquets and the field officer of the day to commence duty.”

of a revolution and the deliverer of a country, restrict himself to the rules, or yield to the visitings of humanity? Be assured such an enterprise supposes in him who conducts it, a singleness of view that can sacrifice the right to the expedient, and the parts to the whole. The wounded of our troops were carried in litters upon the shoulders of the men, and much they suffered in mind and body in this dreary and fearful march. Owing to the weight of the litters and the offensiveness of the wounds of some of the persons in them, the soldiers and sailors who were willing to do their utmost to help convey off their distressed companions, but who were weakened by fatigue and hunger, could not support their burden for any length of time, and were obliged frequently to stop and change. Whenever this took place, Miranda flew into a violent rage; pretending it was an unnecessary delay. At length, he declared that if the wounded retarded the march of the column, they should be put aside and left on the road! This he said in hearing of the wounded, who expected the barbarous threat would be executed, and they should be left to perish without assistance, or to be cut in pieces by the Spaniards. One of the men at-

tached to a litter, conveying an officer, declaring that he was so much spent he could go no farther unless he was relieved ; the general said to the soldier—go on sir, I know what you can do—then turning to the officer, directing the order of march, “ suffer no complaint—shoot that man through the body—give me a pistol here let me do it ”—This officer, lt. col. Roorbach in a very spirited and becoming manner remonstrated with Miranda upon this conduct ; endeavoured to check the torrent of curses he was venting against the men ; and begged him to have some consideration for the wounded and those who carried them. The moment the general threatened to leave the wounded on the road, an officer went to the rear of the column and informed the captain of Artillery and several of his companions what might take place. About twelve in number, determined, if such an attempt was made, to protest against it ; if that did not produce the desired effect, they resolved to resist the order at the point of their swords, being assured of the assistance of the men under their command, to whom they had already stated the barbarity of such a proceeding ; and who were not less indignant on the occasion than their commanders. This

threat of Miranda is perhaps to be attributed to his ungoverned fear of being attacked by the Spaniards, and falling alive into their hands. This fear he may be supposed to have had, and yet not be a coward. I do not deny that he would meet the perils of ordinary battle with real courage. I am persuaded he would rather fall into the hands of his countrymen dead than alive. Armed horsemen were seen hovering upon the flanks and rear of our column; but they never came within reach of musketry. Midway between La Vela and the city, we forded a river, the banks of which were exceedingly steep; here all thought it probable we should be attacked, and it was near this place, that the general made the threat of abandoning his wounded to the mercy of fate. But admitting he was not seriously determined to do so, the event proved that he had no occasion to resort to an expedient of so abominable a complexion to hasten the march, as the Spaniards allowed us to pass the river unmolested. They no doubt over-rated our strength, whilst Miranda in this instance preferred acting on the defensive, as well from an apprehension of their superior force, as to prove the sincerity of his

professions of tender regard towards the people of South America.

In the course of the morning before our march to the city of Coro, about twenty five or thirty Indians were captured. They were as is customary in this country, armed with bows and arrows. They preferred joining our standard to being kept as prisoners. As we entered the city they formed part of the advanced guard ; but the moment the firing took place, they fled precipitately ; leaving their bows and arrows on the ground. It has been reported, that when they saw our men firing on each other, they supposed it was through animosity ; and observed, that if Miranda's men fired at each other, they thought their turn would soon come ; and therefore, they had better seek safety in flight. Whatever might have been the motive which drove them off, they took good care never to make their appearance afterwards.

Two days previous to our evacuation, capt. Johnson, who commanded the *Leander*, with a party of fifteen men, was taken by the Spaniards, which makes nearly eighty men and officers, who have at different times, fallen into the hands of the enemy. The circumstances of this unhappy event are the following :

The Spaniards had for several days previous to that on which Johnson was taken, harrassed the watering parties, that were sent from the squadron to a river about three or four miles distant from the anchorage, and nearly the same distance from the batteries and town then occupied by the troops. This was the only place where a sufficient supply of water could be procured; and the enemy's cavalry were always on the look out, to drive the sailors off, which sometimes happened with the loss of their water casks. Captain Johnson being informed of this circumstance, and wanting water for his crew, obtained permission from the general to arm as many as could be spared from the *Leander* and set out at day light for the river, intending to procure water at all risks and to rout the Spaniards, who at that post were thought to be but few in number: but the night before he put his plan in execution, a reinforcement, composed of horsemen, infantry and Indians, in number perhaps two hundred and fifty, had been stationed under cover of the numerous sand hills, which formed the margin of the stream. The moment Johnson landed from his boat and had drawn up his men, a part of the enemy rushed upon him.

from their concealment, with a heavy fire of arrows and musketry, and soon overpowered him and his party. Several were killed on the spot, and the survivors after an obstinate resistance and receiving many wounds were made prisoners, excepting one, who reached the ship by swimming, and one drowned in a similar attempt. This was at the dawn of day : the firing being perceived from the Lily, a party of thirty men under command of lieut. Barclay, were sent to support Johnson ; but they were too late, to be of any other service, than that of killing and wounding about twenty Spaniards. Lieut. Barclay returned to town with his party, and gave information of the fate of Johnson and his comrades, requesting at the same time that a detachment of our soldiers might be immediately sent in conjunction with his own men to rescue the captives ; however, owing to some cause, never explained, probably because it would not bear an explanation, none of our troops, though they were instantly under arms, received orders to march to their succour until near eight o'clock, at least two hours after the report had reached head quarters—and it is more than probable, that Johnson, if taken alive, was with the remnant of his

men, then on his way to the city of Coro, or already there, at which place the Spaniards would imprison him until they received orders from Caraccas. The reports concerning the real condition of this ill-fated man, have been various and contradictory. Some assert that he was instantly killed; others that he was only slightly wounded. Again we are told that he was desperately mangled in the contest, and was carried in that situation to prison, where he languished several days in misery and expired. Others again tell us that he is still living, and is reserved for trial.\* It is difficult to know which to believe; but if the last be true, it gives some reason to hope that he will not be executed, or even sentenced to death, as he is a British subject, and therefore had a right during the war and agreeable to the law of nations to engage in any expedition against the enemies of that country.

Men versed in the science and practice of war, will inquire with wonder and astonishment for the reason, why this spirited officer was suffered (or rather not forbidden) to go on a watering party, with an inferior force to that

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\* The same uncertainty respecting Johnson, still exists.



which had been already repulsed, without a support by land detached from the infantry and artillery then in the town. One or two gun boats might also have been moored in a situation to act with efficiency in covering their landing. This precautionary measure, strongly enforced by prudence as well as humanity would have saved Johnson and his party ; and enabled them to have procured the water so much wanted. In addition to these important advantages, would have followed the dispersion of the whole, if not the capture of a large portion of the assailants.

Our astonishment increases when we are informed that the troops who volunteered with promptitude and cheerfulness to retrieve this disaster, which ought to have been prevented, were not ordered to march till the expiration of two hours or more, after the intelligence of Johnson's fate had been announced by lieutenant Barclay. Shall we attribute this omission and delay to that want of decision and prospective comprehension, so discernible in all the transactions of Miranda, or to that *nonchalance* as regards the feelings, wants and sufferings of others, which constitutes one of the most prominent features in his character ?

Captain Johnson manifested much zeal in Miranda's cause ; it even extended to the loan of a considerable sum of money. He held the general's note at ninety days, as security for three thousand dollars ; beside other advances and disbursements for the ship which were drawn from his purse at Trinidad.

This paper is in the hands of Johnson's executor, captain Hancock. Much good may it do him, or his heirs, if it is ever recovered ; for there is no man more unwilling to pay his debts than Miranda, especially those which were contracted in consequence of this enterprise. He seems to imagine that it was doing a favour to individuals to allow them to make him large donations of cash and services, the one never to be paid, and the other never to be rewarded, unless he succeeded in establishing a free republick in South America.

It is a satisfaction to reflect that the property of the inhabitants of La Vela de Coro and the city was respected amidst all our wants ; except instances of rapacity in individuals, of a description always to be found in an assemblage of men under arms, and the necessaries taken for our subsistence.

The property found in the king's stores;

being considered as belonging to the free people of South America, was taken in charge for their benefit, by order of the commander in chief. The whole value of this did not exceed fifteen hundred dollars, which is to be divided among the troops.\* What provisions we found in the deserted houses, stores and gardens of the Spaniards, our hunger obliged us to apply to our own use;— had they chosen to stay, it would have been our general's policy to pay in proportion to his ability, for what we wanted. I presume, their persons and property would have been inviolate, at least, so far as they had discovered a willingness to be free, and to take our visit in good part. Though we were thus scrupulous in this respect, we probably shall not have the reputation of our forbearance. It is said, no doubt with truth, that in several instances those inhabitants, who first came into the town after our evacuation, plundered the houses and stores of those who had not yet returned, and gave out that we were the robbers. Our care in this re-

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\* It consisted chiefly of coarse linens, and furnished one shirt and pair of pantaloons to each non-commissioned officer and private soldier.

spect affords almost the only consoling reflection, to be gleaned from a review of our works on the Spanish Main. As I before observed, nearly all the inhabitants, rich and poor, male and female, the sick and the old, as well as the healthy and young had disappeared, having fled to other places and to the woods. What a horrid panick must have seized these inoffensive people, to have driven them to measures so extreme ; and what a scene of distress must their flight have exhibited. It was not, however, in all cases, their own terror that prompted them to quit their homes ; but many, who would rather have encountered infidels than become the companions of wild beasts, were coerced to depart by the Spanish government. The governor drove the multitude out before him like cattle, and would listen to no entreaties from those who desired to stay. Many doubtless thought, they might as well perish by sword as famine ; and that they stood at least as good a chance from the clemency of the invaders as was offered by a retreat into the forests. My heart is wrung to think of the domestick misery that must have been occasioned by this detestable business. Some of it I saw, and heard of more ; and have no doubt there

existed hundreds of instances of extreme suffering, which we could not know. One morning whilst we were at Coro, a young officer informed me, he had accidentally seen a sick and helpless old man, who was near dying from want, having had nothing to eat for the last two days. I proposed to take him some of our provisions before we dined. We accordingly proceeded to his apartment with such sustenance and refreshments as we had. At this unexpected relief, his gratitude and joy were more than he could express. He uttered short thanks in Spanish, for he could speak no English; but his face said a thousand grateful things, that no language could convey. By a gentleman who accompanied us, who understood Spanish, we learned that the old man's family and servant had left him, taking with them all the provisions in the house, the moment that the firing of our cannon at La Vela was heard. He had been long confined by sickness, and was only strong enough to sit in bed; but not to reach his crucifix and prayer book, which were on the window board some paces from his bed side. In this situation he must have expired had we not come to his relief. Before our departure from Coro, he and other suffer-

ing inhabitants whom we knew, were supplied as far as in our power with a stock of provisions, to serve them till their *affrighted* friends returned.

Upon taking my departure from the Main, it is due to gratitude, that I mention the affecting kindness of a Roman priest at Coro, to our sick and wounded. He discovered a most amiable solicitude, both for the comfort of their bodies, and the future welfare of their souls. Towards col. Kirkland, for whose life we entertained serious apprehensions, he exercised the benevolence of a christian and the tenderness of a father. He provided for him not only a comfortable but elegant apartment, with several attendants and every necessary which his situation required. He is held in the most grateful remembrance by that officer. When we considered that this good catholic must have regarded us as enemies to his religion, his king and country and probably to mankind, his benevolence touched our feelings with peculiar force and contributed to sharpen the regret we could not but feel at the terror and distress we occasioned.

Though we evacuated the place, it was not from any apprehension of danger to our persons.

Whilst there we had several alarms ; but none I believe, more terrific than the following :

On the day of our re-embarkation from La Vela, intelligence was announced at head quarters that a corps of Spanish cavalry was advancing against us. A detachment of infantry with a piece of artillery was put under march with a view to prevent their entrance into the town. The commander in chief soon followed; near the environs of the village he found the lieutenant halted, with a cluster of bushes in front. It was then raining in torrents. Miranda supposed this time and place proper for surprising the enemy, then believed to be advancing, by a well directed fire from the ambush. The general puffing and fuming as he approached, said " why don't you fire lieut ? why don't you fire Sir ? " " I see nothing to fire at general : " replied the lieut. " Fire at those bushes then sir, " rejoined the general ; " Fire sir and let them know we have got guns. " The officer blazed away according to order. What havoc was made among the bushes we know not, as no return of the killed and wounded has ever been made. The truth is, the Spaniards never approached nearer than within three or four miles of the town and batteries ; nor was

there any appearance of their force at eleven o'clock the day after, when we weighed anchor, bound to Aruba.

## LETTER XX.

*M. takes possession of Aruba by proclamation.—  
Sickness of the men.—Courts Martial.*

*Aruba, August 22d, 1806.*

MIRANDA has taken formal possession of this island; and announces it to the constituted authorities of the place in the following proclamation, which is written in Spanish and posted up at all the publick places.

### PROCLAMATION.

“Inhabitants of Aruba, circumstances force us to take possession of your island; but rest assured that your religion and commerce shall remain unmolested; and the execution of your laws shall continue in the hands of your present magistrates: conscious that from a virtuous people like you, nothing is to be apprehended. Our object is to emancipate a people, who have long suffered under the rod of tyranny; and who have invited us to give them



a more equitable government. The governor of Caraccas, has offered a reward of thirty thousand dollars, for the head of a citizen, whose life has been from its earliest period devoted to the good of his countrymen; and who will shed the last drop of his blood, in endeavouring to effect in South America, what Washington has done in the United States; what Dion Pelopidas did in Greece; and the Prince of Orange in Holland! Ask the wretch by what laws human or divine, he is authorized to destroy me? except that he wishes to renew in these days, the cruelties of the duke of Alba in the Netherlands, under Phillip II. and which has transmitted his name with infamy to posterity, as well as the government that supported him."

(Signed)

MIRANDA.

(Signed)

THOMAS MOLINI, *Secr. & Regis.*

Let no one impute a want of modesty to this philosophical, cosmopolitan, patriotic performance. The assertion that the South Americans have invited us to give them a more equitable government, is not supported by any evidence, which has come to our knowledge.

Our general professes to expect to "keep

moving" and accomplish his great design. He looks for a considerable reinforcement to be sent to this island by the British. Then he means to try another descent on the Main. Whether either of these events will take place under the auspices of our chief, is now a matter of serious doubt in the minds of the intelligent part of his followers; and in my opinion, in his own mind too, though he does not think proper to own it at this moment. The British officers employed in the expedition, I am persuaded think it hopeless, at least, under the conduct of our leader, and are heartily tired of such a bagatelle service. In pursuance however of his original plan, the general, on the 9th, sent an officer with dispatches to the governor of Jamaica, and to admiral Dacres, the purport of which was to inform them of our partial success on the Main; and to solicit a sufficient number of troops to enable him to regain the country and to keep possession of it, till he can collect a force among the inhabitants, to march to the interior to stronger holds and more important places, than La Vela, or Coro.—Whether the messenger is the best, which might have been selected, is not for me to determine. But there is no reason to think that

if the errand was done ever so well, it would issue in success. There are few British troops in the West Indies; and after what has taken place, none to spare for general Miranda, it is pretty certain.

The Bacchante sloop of war has arrived here since we anchored; but has no orders to join us.

The commander of this ship is entitled to the warmest thanks of our second division, for his attention and kindness to them during the afternoon and night they were on board of his vessel. The officers, in particular, are under great obligations to him for his civility and politeness to them on that occasion. His ship was in the highest order imaginable, and extremely commodious; he is an excellent seaman and manages her in a masterly manner, with a crew under the most complete discipline. You will be surprised in hearing that captain Darcres, her commander, is but eighteen years of age. He is a son of the admiral of that name, and is not only the pride of his father, but will, if he lives, one day be a shining ornament in the British navy.

Our troops have been kept together in a camp formed on the sandy beach of this barren island, where they are exercised morning

and evening, under the command of an officer as little qualified by head or heart, to exercise authority over human beings, as you can imagine; but whom obsequiousness and deference have made very acceptable to the commander in chief.

It is not enough, that the poor slaves, called volunteers, are neither clothed, fed nor paid, and exhausted with the fatigues of our late campaign; they must also be subjected to the strict regulations, and rigid discipline required in an army in the field; and all this administered by a man whom they heartily dislike, and who has as little consideration for the feelings of his fellows, as any man whom God ever suffered to be dressed in authority. But "patience and fortitude are the virtues of soldiers;" and in so good a cause, and in the service of the renowned Miranda, who shall not be happy to bear privations?

The goats of the island are laid under contribution for our use. The rank flesh of these animals, loathsome beyond description, with half a ration of bread, and a little sour wine, constitutes all our sustenance.

Distressing sickness has spread among the troops—For the two nights and the day im-

immediately before our evacuation of La Vela de Coro, there was a continual and excessive rain; to which our men were exposed. After getting on board, they were obliged in general to keep on their wet clothes, for want of changes of garments. This circumstance, joined to their previous fatigues and to the want of comforts on their arrival here, brought on an inflammatory fever, which has raged with great violence, and proved fatal to several, though not to so many as might be expected. About forty men and eight or ten officers have been confined in miserable hovels, called hospitals, under every circumstance of distress and poverty. Our diet is bad enough to make the well sick, and to the sick it is insupportable. Besides, our poor invalids have little or no attendance. Many of them are without shirts to their backs, or any other sufficient clothing, and without beds, stretched on the floor. Miranda views all this suffering of his followers with a peculiar *sang froid*. It is worthy of a philosopher no doubt to bear the calamities of others with resignation. It becomes the firmness of a great captain not to be too much affected with those hardships of his soldiers, which he

is unable to remedy or alleviate ; but in this case the condolence of the chief would do the wretches some good ; and if he chose, he might one would think, see them provide with more comforts. Instead of visiting the hospitals, or interesting himself in their management, he sits the whole day at his quarters, the best house in town for good living and convenience, picking his teeth in silence ; or talking to some of his staff, who, with a few exceptions, are as negligent and unconcerned as himself. Among the exceptions is the general's aid de camp, Mr. Smith, who does all in his power to alleviate the condition of the invalids.

*Sept. 20th.* For want of something else to do, or to gratify the piques of the chief, rather than from any serious occasion or just pretence, several courts martial have been instituted in form ; several officers arrested, and one tried and sentenced to the *cruel punishment* of being dismissed from this honourable and inviting service. It may afford you some amusement as well as enlighten you on the nature of our social compact to see a history of these mock tribunals in their chronological order. The first was created at Port of Spain, in July, with

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the same formality, as if we had been an acknowledged army; as you will perceive by the following general order.

“ *Leander*, 19th July, 1806.

“ G. O.” A general court martial, consisting of one field officer and four captains to assemble on Monday morning, at 10 o’clock, on board of this ship, for the trial of such prisoners as shall be brought before them.

Major SANDS, *President*.

Capt. LOUDON,	}	<i>Members.</i>
Capt. LEDLIE,		
Capt. ALLISON,		
Capt. RANKIN,		

Lieut. HOSACK is appointed to act as *Judge Advocate*, to whom lieut. col. ROORBACH will send the names of the prisoners and alleged crimes, and cause witnesses to attend.”

The business of this court martial was to try a Columbian lieut. and surgeon, who had offended capt. Campbell. They came on board of the *Leander* one night, somewhat exhilarated, in consequence of having fallen into hospitable company. Here they made a noise so loud, that the capt. of the *Lily*, who lay near, apprehended there was a general riot, the gun of a sentinel on board going off just at that instant,

as appeared afterwards by accident. He accordingly dispatched a boat for the Mirandonians concerned, with orders to bring them dead or alive into his ship. The lieut. resisted at first; but being overpowered, was brought with the surgeon on board the Lily. He seemed to think this exercise of authority in the Englishman an indignity, presuming that he was not accountable to him for his conduct on board the Leander; and that it was nothing to capt. Campbell, whether the Mirandonians were drunk or sober, vociferous or mute. He and his comrade were, however, kept in close arrest for trial. The court made several ineffectual attempts to proceed to business. The members were so indisposed to their office, that they could not be all got together. One of them lately from Scotland, learning that he was to be summoned to figure at the martial board, betook himself into the country to be out of the way; alleging that he was not well enough acquainted with the American articles of war to sit in judgment on the conduct of Columbian culprits. When a board was formed, they could not lengthen their faces to the solemnity of the occasion amidst the arch looks and indirect ridicule of the



officers who were spectators ; and on different pretexts delayed entering upon their functions, which they felt were only a caricature of authority. Finding the business was all a farce, Miranda dissolved the court martial ; but to preserve the semblance of power, alleged as a reason that he had condescended in consequence of the intercession of capt. Campbell and some other officers to pardon the offenders ; hoping this goodness would have the best effect upon their conduct. I have seen the defence that the lieutenant intended to make, if he was arraigned, in which, besides objecting to the constitution of the court, alleging that one member had given his opinion ; that another was his personal enemy, &c. he pleads against the right of jurisdiction : the purport of this plea was, " I have sworn to serve the free people of South America, or the government, which they may establish ; in my military conduct, having the benefit of the articles of war of the United States. Are you gentlemen the people of South America, or is your authority derived from the government which they have established ? Gen. Miranda, all his volunteers, as well as his ship, are here by courtesy ; they and myself are amenable to the civil :

authority of this island and no other. How can you try me by the American articles of war, with the British ensign flying over your heads?" for at that time the Leander on board of which the court assembled was under British colours. During the space of some months there was hardly a week, when this questionable ship wore the same ensign. Sometimes the Columbian flag was hoisted; sometimes the American; at others the British; and frequently none whatever. He concluded with saying, "you have no right to arraign my conduct; and if you do me any injury, I shall apply to the laws of this colony for redress." Whether this plea would have been admitted is uncertain; but it agrees with the opinion which the officers generally had of their rights and obligations. Under this impression, it is perhaps remarkable that they behaved so well. An honest man is very properly said to be more honest on account of the law; and the licentious may be expected to exemplify the necessity of law on many occasions. From the nature of the thing however, the will of the commander in chief seems to be an authority from which there is no appeal. About the same time he chose to exert it in turning out

of the army a young man without asking the opinion of any court martial.

Though we have stipulated for the benefit of the articles of war of the United States, it would seem from this instance that he considers we hold our places not during good behaviour, but during his pleasure. This person was a Mr. B. of Barbadoes, of good education and respectable family. His real offence undoubtedly was, that he allowed himself to laugh at some of the absurdities relating to the expedition that were daily practised under the eye of our chief. Miranda, not satisfied with dismissing him from the army, aimed to disgrace him in the view of his comrades, by making the act a part of general orders; charging him with conducting improperly in various ways and in disobedience of orders; and observing "that he begs to be understood by all going upon the expedition, that while he will pay every attention and respect to the meritorious and deserving officer and soldier, he will not allow any person that acts improperly to go unpunished." B. being left destitute in a strange place, thought proper to proceed with the expedition unknown to Miranda. He wished to surprise him by his valour and usefulness

at the landing; and to convince the general that he had done him injustice. Accordingly B. was extremely serviceable at the attack on La Vela de Coro, at which time and afterwards, he proved himself to be possessed of a degree of military skill and invincible courage; but though Miranda was assured of this; and acknowledged him to be a "man of merit and perseverance," his enmity was not to be appeased; and he would not reinstate him; nor allow him to be considered any thing but an uncommissioned volunteer, in which capacity he remained until the abandonment of the enterprise, and then returned to his native island.

The second of these courts was instituted with a view of trying some young men, charged with trivial offences, which in any regular army would have passed with a moderate reprimand. But in these cases, the persons arraigned were those not belonging to the *coterie* profoundly attached to Miranda, and who gave their tongues some greater latitude concerning his affairs, than he approved. He thought it necessary to check the evil, which he apprehended might spread, and thus deter others from the profaneness of judging and condemning his notions and movements. The difficul-

ty of organizing the court prevented their proceeding, and thus deprived us of the benefit of witnessing what Miranda was wont to term. "salutary examples of correct discipline." The young men were liberated from arrest after ten or twelve days and ordered to return to duty. The third court was called in consequence of a dissolution of the former; and after much exertion entered upon business. The adjutant of the North American Infantry was arraigned; but it was thought best to let him go. The principal offence laid to his charge was disputing and countermanding the orders of his superiour officer in not delivering a camboose to the hulans. The adjutant did certainly subject himself to a suspicion of contumacy by this refusal, but his conduct admitted of so much apology that proceedings against him were dropped. He received an order from the quarter master general to take this most necessary article from the Leander, for the purpose of cooking the goat-flesh rations of the North American Infantry, who were under the particular care of this adjutant. Accordingly the camboose had been daily applied to the preparation of the meals for the infantry and lent occasionally to some other corps. At one

unlucky time, when this machine was filled with the dinner for his men, which was about half through the process of boiling ; and when it was engaged after he had done with it to be lent to the Indian volunteers, whom the general calls " my peoples " and who were encamped near him ; there came a subaltern with an order from a major instantly to deliver up the ~~cam~~boose, maugre the necessities of the hungry infantry and those who expected their next turn. The adjutant's blood was a little too much roused by this apparent contempt of the wants of himself and his men ; and he made a resolute though an ineffectual stand against the demand, conceiving very naturally that neither he nor his people could with any reason be expected at so short warning to renounce the custom of eating their dinner, such as it was.

The Chev. de B. was charged with a usurpation of authority and with cruelty and ungentlemanlike conduct. But the most serious accusation was that of " contempt and disrespect to the commander in chief, in writing and sending to him a contemptuous and disrespectful letter, containing false assertions and reflections on the characters of his superiour officers and those officers composing the gen-

eral court martial, ordered to assemble on the 9th." The court did him the justice to acquit him of the charge of cruelty and ungentleman-like behaviour; but found him guilty of the last charge; and sentenced him to be dismissed from the service. Without doubt the letter was lofty, indignant and sarcastick, and all this it might be, and contain no falsehood. In law it is a well known maxim, in some instances, the greater the truth the greater the libel; and surely it became the court to pronounce censures upon themselves and our chief to be false. Notwithstanding this sentence, I believe it is the opinion of all who know de B. and probably of his judges that he is still entitled to the character of a gentleman, a good officer and a man of honour, as far as came to, our knowledge.

In two instances at Aruba, the differences between officers, required the "amende honourable" and the parties went ought to fight duels; but through the prudence of the seconds in one case a reconciliation took place on the ground; and from the same cause probably in another, two exchanges of shot left the combatants with a sound skin; and the challenger said he was satisfied.

The services of the judge advocate in the court martial gained him the honour of promotion, and he was raised from the rank of lieut. to a captaincy of artillery. This kind of paper reward has on various occasions been vouchsafed, as the uneasiness of an individual with his grade, the necessity of answering his call for pay, or the policy of our chief to appear to have something to give, and to countenance merit, seemed to require.

During his arrest, chevalier de B. was treated with as much severity as if he had been a conspirator or felon. He was obliged, by order of the general, to confine himself on board of a small transport schooner, where he almost wanted necessaries; and when he came on shore to trial, was escorted by two or three soldiers with fixed bayonets. It is very probable that he will not hang himself of chagrin for not deserving the good will of the adventurer and his court martial; though he, like some others of us, may not be able to think with much patience of the ill stars, that brought him into the power of such a man. As to the sentence of dismissal, he is very possibly so unwise as to imagine *tant pis, tant mieux*.\*

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\* So much the worse, so much the better.



I believe many besides him would be very willing to earn a similar sentence, if they were certain the doing it would not expose them to something more. But the spirit of Miranda is chafed, and the consciousness of being disliked and distrusted, makes him suspicious and revengeful. He has some degree of that species of cowardice which resents the pang it feels; and the animosities among some of the officers are rancorous. It would not be surprising, if a man were to avow his disgust with the service, or his want of respect for its leader, that the latter should pack a court, who being governed by his will, instead of contenting themselves with taking away the offender's commission, should make him feel concern for his liberty or even life. The apprehension of becoming victims to malice is enough to make the officers guarded in their conversation, except among those who are confidential.

## LETTER XXI.

*Animadversions of officers on the Expedition—  
Curacoa scheme.**Aruba, Sept. 21st, 1806.*

YOU will naturally ask, what is the purport of the conversations which these persons hold? They express their sense of disappointment in all their expectations concerning Miranda and his schemes. "He lured us," say they "from our country and homes by promises and declarations entirely unfounded. Why did he not tell us of the chances against his success, which he must have known to exist, instead of saying, that his adventure was infallible, setting aside the dangers of the seas. Through his delusive representations, seventy of our countrymen are dragging out their miserable existence in the Spanish mines; and ten are reported to have come to an ignominious end on the scaffold. The groans and tears of their widows, children, brothers, sisters and friends accuse him before high heaven as the immediate author of their afflictions."

On the subject of the loss of our schooners,

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the following is extracted from the journal of one of our principal officers, whose station necessarily gave him frequent access to the general; though it differs in some respects from the account given in my letter of May 6th, I think it proper to be communicated in this place. His remarks are couched in these terms:—"When the *Leander* bore away from the land to avoid falling between the two Spanish vessels, which appeared to be the object of their commanders, the brig being upon the larboard, and the schooner on the starboard quarter, the *Bee* came within hail of the *Leander*; capt. Huddle informed capt. Lewis from his speaking trumpet, that he was out of ammunition. Lewis replied that he could not then send the boat with a supply, but he must keep *near* the *Leander* and *be ready to board*. This undoubtedly prevented the capt. of the *Bee* from pressing sail as he otherwise would have done. The *Leander*, however, receded from the *guarda costas*, while the latter gained upon our schooners. At length the *Bacchus* bore away wing and wing before the wind. The Spanish brig instantly pursued. Previous to this *Miranda* had gone below, and had sent for capt. Lewis; what passed between them

we shall never learn except from their own declarations; for in this case as in all others of importance, Miranda did not permit a third person to be present. When Lewis came upon deck, it was supposed we should, if possible, engage the Spanish schooner, still in pursuit of us, and bearing on our starbord quarter, the Bee having fallen on our larboard. No orders to this effect were however given. Lewis told me that the general wished to see me below. When I entered his state room I found the general with a chart in his hand and pointing to the islands of Trinidad and Margaritta, he said "we must go first to the island of Aves or Bonair for water, and I think we had then best shape our course for Trinidad, where I have resources and shall receive assistance from the English; here is Margaritta which we can take if we think proper with the force we now have; the pilot tells me we can beat up in ten or fifteen days.—What is your opinion?" I said in reply, "I concurred with him both in the feasibility and expediency of this measure;" but added, "let us endeavour to save our schooners, general. The Bacchus has borne away before the wind and is pursued by the Spanish brig; I believe it is the opinion of

those who are skilled in naval tactics, that we can now put about, engage and carry the Spanish schooner unless she outsails us ; by this attempt we shall probably divert the brig from chasing the Bacchus, as she will be under apprehensions for her consort, and the Bee will be again protected by our ship and ready to assist in boarding. At all events sir, and upon every calculation we shall save our comrades. It is the desire of us all upon deck, general, to perish with our companions rather than become eye witnesses to their capture." " Well then"—was Miranda's reply to this representation; the meaning of which I thus interpreted— if you will make the attempt, I shall not or will not, or most likely cannot prevent you ; but I have given my private orders to capt. Lewis. For Lewis declared the next day and always afterwards, " that Miranda had ordered him to bear away and escape." This the general never denied : but said in a conversation with me the following morning, that " Lewis undoubtedly would endeavour to throw all the blame upon him," thus intimating a consciousness that he was responsible. Every circumstance attending this affair tallies with the foregoing remarks, whatever Miranda may choose to say to the

contrary. Before he went below, he asked the officer who acted as aid to Lewis, "what shall we do to save our schooners," "*fight sir*," was the answer. I shall not say what motive induced him to order the flight of the *Leander*. A desire to save his own person is the most probable solution ; yet while on deck he appeared cool and collected. When he first came up in the morning, he looked rather big and full of fight. After viewing the Spanish vessels with his pocket glass, he observed to me "well sir, can't we burn and destroy these rascals." "We must try, general ; if we do not burn them, they will certainly burn us." Whatever he would or would not have done, it is now to no purpose to enquire. Our associates are in captivity ; if their lives are spared, their miseries and sufferings will be worse than death ; and we are left to reflect with grief and indignation that we were not permitted, though every heart burned with impatience for the conflict, to make an effort for their salvation."

The conduct of their chief in other particulars his officers arraign on various grounds. "At Barbadoes and Trinidad," say they, "he was near defeating the disposition in British governors and commanders to assist him, and did

do it in a considerable degree, by the extravagance of his expectations and claims. It is certain," they observe, "that before he sailed for the Main, he might have obtained funds for his purposes by only promising to capitalists commercial privileges, which it was in his power to promise and might have been to perform. Though his poverty paralyzed all his operations, he did not avail himself of this resource, alleging that his "people" would supply him with all he wanted. By force he took possession of one of their strong holds and a chief city; yet when he had obtained these advantages, he professed to have scruples about using this same force to secure what he had gained. What business had he at all in that country in arms, if he did not mean to exert power when persuasion failed? He contented himself with sending out proclamations and pamphlets, instead of demanding the king's treasure, or levying contributions or resorting to any of those expedients which belong to usages of warfare. He might have maintained himself in La Vela for a length of time; and had he continued there, he would undoubtedly have been reinforced from different quarters. If he had friends and adherents in that country

as he always declared, his stay would have brought them to rally round him. His continuance would have accorded with the intentions and expectations of the British admiral, who had assisted him so far. Admiral Cochrane undoubtedly intended to give him all the chance that a sufficient naval force could supply. In proof of this, several armed vessels, including one seventy-four, were sent to support the squadron first put under his orders, and supposed to be at Coro, with directions to land a number of men, as they might be found necessary and useful; but finding we had departed in an unaccountable manner, they have naturally concluded that he is unequal to his enterprise and is not worth supporting. It is not surprising that their orders should not extend to conducting him from one part to another of the Caribbean sea or to assist in a second attempt on the Main, when he had made such a *faux pas* in the first. Undoubtedly they are ready to seize the pretext which they now have for dissolving a connexion attended with expense to the government and mortification to its patrons; satisfied that they do more than justice to his claims in conveying him to a place of safety. Had he displayed the ener-



gy which became his pretensions and means, there is reason to believe he would have become so powerful as to afford protection to those who should choose to join his standard, or at least make terms for his captive followers, whose relief was a primary motive with many of us for going a second time on the expedition. What has he done to rescue these unfortunate men? Having determined to evacuate the Main, he might have made the liberation of the prisoners a condition of his departure. The government there would not have thought the surrender of the prisoners too great a price for even the temporary riddance of so troublesome a visitor. If this be supposed impracticable, why has he never made an effort with the English commanders to have them put on the footing of prisoners of war? In short that this man is able to do evil is certain, but to do good, where is his skill or force? He was an object of abhorrence to his countrymen before; he is now regarded with contempt." How far these complaints and charges are true, let facts decide. To these causes of uneasiness is to be added the dissatisfaction of the American officers at being superceded in their grade by those who embarked in the cause more recent-

ly. From the information we have received, we think a war between the United States and Spain almost certain. In this case, Miranda might get resources from our country. But the Leander concern have been such sufferers, and the American officers and soldiers are so much disgusted, the general would probably be disappointed in his expectation of further support from individuals of the United States. I see no probability that the English will do any thing more. You will now enquire, what do we propose ? As I have observed, we are in the power of this man : and have good reasons to apprehend serious collisions, if we take any steps to get rid of his authority. If we were of one sentiment and party, it would certainly be easy to prescribe our terms and to require him to command as we please ; to take the command ourselves, or to abandon him altogether. Our proper course would undoubtedly be to release ourselves from his service, or to compel him to give us the direction of the Leander and all the men, over whom the British have no absolute authority. But an attempt of this kind might not succeed, without bloodshed, as he has a few sycophants and gasconades still about his person, who might op-

pose it. We prefer more suffering, rather than increase the contempt and ridicule of our enemies and the world, by cutting one another's throats. Miranda is perhaps indebted to our pride more than our affection for the continuance of his authority, if not for the safety of his head.

As a proof of the discontent that prevails among the troops, the Indians and Spanish people of colour have already threatened to desert into the woods if they are not soon better treated; they complain of seeing no omen of happier times; of the tyranny of the pompous bashaw who commands them in the camp, and of the want of food and apparel. We are very short of provisions and ill accommodated in every respect; it is therefore not surprising that the Indians, though used to exercise patience under sufferings, should despond and hold this language.

The only officer of rank and influence, who feels for their situation, and in whose sincerity and friendship they have confidence, is still confined with his wounds, at his quarters some distance from town. They are therefore deprived of his personal interposition. This dis-

content extends to the Spanish officers\* also. Their displeasure is often expressed in the strongest terms against our chief. To one of these gentlemen, an American officer observed, that "he believed the expedition would never succeed under Miranda ; his indecision, caprice, petulance, meanness and duplicity render him unfit for conducting any enterprise of magnitude."—"Oui" said he "*nous le ferons sans cet chien Miranda. Il n'est pas capable de faire un grand chose. Il a nous trompé.*"

Their tempers have been soured by their recent disappointment on the Main ; and not theirs alone ; there are few indeed, who do not sincerely lament ever having had any thing to do with our humbug expedition, as it is now very properly called. You can have no idea to what a distressing situation we are reduced. Our stores can only hold out, even with the strictest economy but a short period ; the island affords but little water and few supplies

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\* Four of these gentlemen joined us at Trinidad, and were commissioned afterwards at *Coche*. A publication of their names was deemed improper ; some or all of them having friends in the Spanish provinces, who might be made to suffer on their account.

of any kind ; we suffer the want in a great measure of almost every necessary ; and what renders it still worse, the moment must soon arrive, when this miserable island, drained by its hungry intruders of its present scanty stock, can supply no relief, even if Miranda had the means and inclination to make us comfortable. Of the former, he pretends to be destitute ; and I much doubt whether he possesses the latter. He is at present certainly no example of the softening influence of adversity ; I believe rather, a black chagrin has destroyed his sympathies with his followers. So that we exist, execute his orders, and form a guard to protect him from the vengeance of the incensed Spaniards, no matter what we undergo ; we answer all that this *renowned* Miranda requires.

His majesty's brig Ferret arrived here on the 13th, from Jamaica, and landed the general's messenger. The result of the mission, though not publicly known, is as we expected, unfavourable. Admiral Dacres and the governor of Jamaica replied to the application of Miranda, that they knew nothing more of his expedition than what they learned from rumour and the publick prints, that they had received no orders from administration to afford

it any aid, and had nothing more to give him but wishes of such success as his design merited.

The English ship Elephant of 74 guns is now at anchor here ; it has been said that she is to join us ; but this is all a puff ; such as we are used to feed upon. The frigate Galatea and brig Express, both of which have been laying here some time, sailed on the 19th, and we shall probably not see them again. The British officers are very averse to being attached to his excellency Don Francisco. They do not appear to think they shall earn laurels or riches in his cause. The Elephant sailed yesterday for Jamaica, and the schooner Pickle, lately arrived here has sailed for England. By her the general has sent dispatches ; and a number of intercepted letters, written by officers of the Spanish government describing the apprehensions of the government of Caraccas respecting Miranda. They were taken by the English sloop of war Osprey, whilst we were in possession of Coro, from the Spanish mail boat on her passage from La Guira to Cumana and Margaritta.

It is reported that we are soon to quit this island. Wherever we go, we shall hardly

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change for the worse. The inhabitants of this wretched place, to whom we have been a heavy burden will no doubt celebrate the day of our departure.

*Sept. 26th.* I have seen our general for the first time these three weeks. Like the Grand Lama he is seldom visible, but to those select few who are so advanced in purity and wisdom as to be worthy to approach his august presence. There was once a time when he was very accessible but that time has passed away; and it is not wonderful since he would see many an anxious and perturbed countenance, and hear perhaps too many complaints, if he allowed himself to be easily visited by his officers. But though he may resemble the Grand Lama in being invisible to vulgar eyes, he does not resemble him in that divine tranquillity and repose of soul, which distinguishes the Thibetian object of worship. Of late, as you may think natural, he has commonly appeared very much occupied with unquiet thoughts. To day his aspect is unusually severe, heavy and desponding, as though he was "revolving the various fates of men below." The other officers around him, seem to have received a stimulus, not of the agreeable kind. Armstrong's brows are

knit together as if he apprehended dismissal, or had heard extremely bad news—or it may be owing to the unruly workings of the bile, which his system generates in dangerous abundance. Count de Rouvray takes shorter steps than he is wont and in a right line, backwards and forwards, neither looking to the right nor left, paying no attention to any who pass by him ; he appears entirely abstracted. Unless I am deceived he is digging out of his brains some “effectual expedients” to be formed by his excellency into “practicable plans.” The forge in which our councils and measures are produced, is a complete manufactory of these articles. Count de Rouvray furnishes crude ore called “expedients,” extracted from the deep cogitations of his mind. This is put into the general’s smelting furnace, which is always kept hot and in readiness to bring on a *fusion*. The quarter master general blows the bellows of adulation, whilst the colonel of engineers, by opposition, sometimes furnishes coals in abundance to keep up the flame ; and again by the cold water of objections, damps and almost extinguishes the fire. There are subordinate characters, whose business it is to do little jobs about the forge, as “every individual in



our army is rated according to his merits and talents." I have observed that those who have neither are best off, if they did but know it; never being called upon in affairs of consequence, they are not in danger of his excellency's terrible frowns, nor liable to be intoxicated by his approbation. They have nothing to do, but to bite their nails and lament their insignificance in obscurity. Col. Roorbach, who has more spirits, youth and vivacity than any man of his years in Christendom, appears in tolerable good humour; but still it is evident ~~that~~ all is not well within. There seems to be a general inquietude from his excellency to his most devoted valet. Those who have no state affairs to disturb their minds, have something else, equally important to them; such as reflecting how they shall pay their bills in this place. I have seen but two landlords to day, who both look thoughtful and dull, undoubtedly from calculating profit and loss. You will now ask, what can occasion this extraordinary perturbation of your cabinet; I know not, unless it be the failure of a thing called the Curacoa scheme. Miranda has been trying to intrigue that island into his possession. An ambassador by the name of P. who was sent there, has lately

returned after an unsuccessful negotiation. The governor of Curacoa "*knows no such man as gen. Miranda.*" What an ignorant man this governor must be! Surely our commander in chief is *known* from one end of the earth to the other! The governor above alluded to, has the *cruelty* to declare that he cannot *spare* the island *yet*, that gen. Miranda must *call again*. What impudence to refuse so modest a request as our chief *condescended* to make—only to be admitted into the quiet possession of the island of Curacoa, and to take *all* the Spanish property as a *reward* for *going* there! About six weeks ago his excellency commenced operating upon a scheme, which he has had long in contemplation of possessing himself of Curacoa. To bring this desirable object about, as he had not a sufficient force of his own, and as the English ships then at his disposal, were either not able or not willing to attempt an attack on that island, he resolved to try what diplomatick skill would do? For this purpose he employed a resident of Aruba, giving him instructions to wait on the governor of Curacoa and to inform him that he should be paid a certain sum of money, if the island surrendered on the appearance before it of a small English

squadron, which should be forth coming as soon as he agreed to the terms stipulated in the instructions of Miranda's ambassador, of which the following is the tenor : viz. that in the event of a surrender, all the Spanish property should on the governor's receiving his *douceur* be put into the hands of Don Francisco; and the Dutch property to be put in possession of the British, who should conduct him to his new dominions. P. after being absent five weeks, and creating much anxiety by his delay, returned with an answer that the governor of Curacao knew no such man as Don Francisco de Miranda, commander in chief of the Columbian army; and could therefore enter into no negociation on the subject of selling his master's property and his own government. It is also reported, and generally credited that P. was prevailed upon to *sell* Miranda; and that he went to La Guira where he made known the Don's intentions with regard to Curacao and his future designs respecting the Spanish Main. To counteract the effects of this report however, the ambassador asserts that he was arrested the moment of his arrival in the island and remained in duress until just before his departure. Whether this be true, or

whether the charge of betraying his excellency be also true, certain it is that P. divulged his instructions on the very day he received them. He had two letters in his hands relative to this business; one written in French, signed, *de Miranda*, and the other in English, signed by his Columbian majesty's *private secretary*. The first contained his powers and instructions. The second was addressed to a merchant of Curacoa, who was honoured with an invitation to assist P. if necessary in his negotiations, when he could bring matters to bear. Both of these letters he exposed before he took passage for the execution of his mission. P. brought intelligence, on his return, that a number of Spaniards had crossed over from Curacoa to Aruba, with a design on the *neck* of our chief. One or two of the "virtuous people" of this place were put in irons, and closely imprisoned on suspicion of being *privy* to this *black intent*. A boat did actually come from the Main, with several armed men on board; but a knowledge of it reaching head quarters in good season they were pursued, after a few had landed, and fled without being overtaken.

## LETTER XXII. .

*New captain appointed to the Leander—His ill conduct and cruelty to the sailors—Condition of the sick on board—Miranda's treatment of capt. Meade, commander of the brig Commodore Barry—Soliloquy.*

*Aruba, Sept. 25th, 1806.*

THOUGH our situation is necessarily bad, it is rendered worse than it need be by the ill management of Miranda and others to whom he delegates his power. In many concerns that relate to our enterprise, they appear to do every thing but that which should be done. Indeed, so accustomed are we to their perverse and impolitick proceedings, that we are disappointed when they do any thing that is not preposterous, or is in a tolerable degree considerate. The commander of the *Leander*, Waldegrave, as I told you, having become sick and removed to the hospital, it was necessary his place should be supplied. As though we had not enough of unavoidable ills, without some voluntary additions, who should be selected for this place but a man as unfit as

can be conceived, neither soldier, sailor nor gentleman. Puffed up with his little brief authority, he employs it in a manner, precisely the most offensive and tyrannical. The officers on board have been repeatedly the objects of his insolence ; and the men of his wanton cruelty. The former are so much tamed by their adversities, that they do not think of repelling his encroachments ; and the poor sailors, what can they do, but bend in silence under the lash of the low bred tyrant ? A few days ago he had a man tied to the gang way, ordering the boatswain's mate to give him forty lashes ; a liberty with the rights of an individual and the rules of military and naval discipline for which as you recollect de B. was brought to answer before a court martial. An officer who happened to be on board from the island, whilst this brute was gratifying his ears with the cries of the sailor under punishment drew his sword, and ordered the boatswain's mate to desist. This timely interference saved four or five more from the lash, who had been sentenced that morning to the gang way, by this vile upstart. A number of the sick troops were some days ago put on board the *Leander*, now laying about two miles from

town. To these distressed creatures, this man shewed an inhumanity, which we should wonder to find in a cannibal. Judge you of their condition to be at the mercy of a wretch who could answer the calls for relief, from those who were lingering under disease and want, frequently with curses; and even refuse them wholesome water to allay their thirst when burning with fever. Instead of sending on shore once a day for a sufficient quantity of fresh water for the whole ship's company including the sick, he procured only a partial supply, and this he husbanded and confined to the use of himself, his dog and a portion of the sailors with whom he was making a party, whilst he caused the sick to be served with water that had been for some time on board, which was stale and sometimes putrified; giving this brutal reason "that the well should be his care, in order to keep them so, as it was uncertain whether the sick would live or die; and if the latter happened, attention would be lost upon them." This conduct was well known at head quarters, yet the wretch, who we have lately of it was continued in a situation, out some void both an opportunity to inflict selected for thery, and an inclination to use it

that would disgrace a savage. Complaints after complaints, and representation after representation, respecting the behaviour of this fellow have been sent to Miranda without procuring redress and indeed without obtaining notice. Being placed in command at the instance of the quarter master general, and approved of by the general, he has no occasion to be scrupulous about his duty, his treatment of others, nor his manners.—What motive is there to pay court to our superiours, if they will not bear us out in our villanies, and we must behave as well as if we rested on our character. Become a favourite, if you wish the liberty of being a domineering poltroon with impunity.

You will remember, mention has been made of our being attended to the Spanish Main by two merchant vessels ; the brig Commodore Barry and the schooner Trimmer. Captain Edward Meade commanded the first, and capt. Hancock the last. It is proper in this place to relate the conduct of Miranda towards the commander of the brig. I shall take some other opportunity to speak of capt Hancock's affair. Capt Meade arrived from Philadelphia at Port of Spain with a cargo of flour some-



time before we sailed. The market being very low, he was tempted to listen to proposals for trying his chance on the Main, under the auspices of Miranda; with whom he made the following contract, signed by his quarter master general.

*Trinidad, July 23d, 1806.*

Don Francisco de Miranda, commander in chief of the Columbian Army:—I have this day agreed with and given permission to captain Edward Meade, of the city of Philadelphia, commanding the brig Commodore Barry, to sail with, and under the protection of the naval force, engaged in my expedition, to South America; on the following terms: viz. captain Meade shall sail with the expedition, and shall not leave the squadron without my permission till a landing is effected in some part of South America. He shall then be permitted to sell his cargo to the people of the country, at the highest prices he can obtain, free of duty. It is understood that the commander in chief or the government of the country shall have a preference of purchase, upon their allowing the same prices, as can be obtained from individuals. It is also agreed that captain Meade shall have liberty to proceed to

another market (not an enemy's port) provided, the first attempt to effect a landing is not accomplished within six days\* after the arrival of the squadron at the place of destination. It is understood that captain Meade shall have good dispatch in the disposal of his cargo ; and upon his embarkation for North America, he shall take an officer on board of his brig, bearing dispatches for the commander in chief, free of all expense and charges."

Although the landing was effected, there was no government and no people to be customers of captain Meade ; and he, finding that our expedition did not succeed, and that it was useless for him to remain there, requested the general to allow him to proceed, according to agreement, to another port. Miranda, after many importunities once answered, that he might go where he pleased. But when on our evac-



\* The general extended this term to ten days, before the contract was signed by his quarter master general ; and though Miranda dictated the contract himself, he refused to place his *own* signature to it. Whether it was a motive of his prudence, or the effect of accident, is not easily determined ; but Miranda never used his own name, when that of another person would answer his purpose.

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uating La Vela de Coro, Meade shaped his course for Curracoa ; one of the men of war brigs fired several shot at him and compelled the Commodore Barry to join the squadron again. This compulsory measure was known to have resulted from the instructions of our chief, which were given previous to our departure from La Vela de Coro ; otherwise the American brig would not have been molested. She was forced to accompany us to Aruba ; and here has been embargoed during the whole time we have had possession of this island. When Meade expostulated against these proceedings, the general said " the law of nations justified the detention." The law of necessity perhaps he might have said with more exactness. At the time Meade was embargoed, there was an apprehension that the English ships might abandon us on account of a disagreement between Miranda and the British officers. In this case we should have stood in peculiar need of the Commodore Barry's cargo of flour and provisions, as our supplies were nearly out. Indeed, from the time we fell in with the Lily, after our defeat at Porto Cabello, to the present time, the English vessels attached to the enterprise, have furnished almost all our supplies ; with the ex-

ception of a quantity of wine and flour, supplied by individuals of Trinidad; who were so wise as to think a commission in the emancipator's army, a ticket in fortune's lottery worth the risk of their property.

Our parting from Aruba is considered as an abandonment of the expedition. One of our wits, acquainted with scripture, has given me the following soliloquy, which may well be said to breathe the sorrow and indignation of the defeated enthusiast, or *ci-devant* deliverer of South America.

“Verily, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have not hearkened unto my *sayings* and have been heedless of my revolutionary doctrines, and have disregarded my proclamations, *I will go out* from among a corrupt nation and a perverse people.—The time is nigh at hand when ye shall fall by the kings of your own choice and the idols whom ye have set up unto yourselves; nor will I rescue you from the bondage of your forefathers; ye shall continue under the yoke of the French and the Spaniards, unless the English deliver you; and *I will strive* to harden the hearts of the English against you, that they may not listen to you in the day of your great calamity and tribulation:

I will mock when your affliction cometh. Your enemies shall feed on the harvest of your fields, they shall riot in your dwellings and enjoy the labours of your hands. All this shall come upon you, *because* ye have not *known me*, and because ye have not followed my precepts. Had ye not turned your *backs* upon me, I would have been your deliverance; ye should have possessed an inheritance of democracy, which should have lasted till time was grey with years; ye should have been *my people*, and I would have *lived* among you, and been your *head* to instruct and govern you in all things according to my own exalted principles of government, and your *arm* to defend you against every foe; but ye have not known me, even so, I have renounced you."

## LETTER XXIII.

*Departure from Aruba.—Miranda and suite  
embark in the Seine frigate.—Licut. Dwyer,  
an English officer, takes command of the  
Leander.—Events during the passage.—  
Arrival at Grenada.*

*Leander at sea, Sept. 28th, 1806.*

ON the morning of the 27th, we left Aruba under convoy of his majesty's ship *La Seine*, commanded by capt. Atkins. We are bound to Trinidad, Grenada or Barbadoes, but which is not told. The *Lily*, *Attentive* and our gun boats got under weigh the day before, meaning to beat up along the Main to Trinidad, while we stand to the northward, for one of the islands mentioned. Our officers and troops are distributed among the vessels lately employed in Miranda's enterprise. This disposition of his forces confirms the supposition that he has given up his design. The general, Molini, his publick secretary, Mr. Smith, his aid-de-camp, and some other officers take their passage in the *Seine*. Miranda very wisely selects a stronger and swifter vessel than the *Leander*.

He has never sailed in her since we left Trinidad in July ; for she is obliged frequently to be taken in tow, and in case she should be abandoned to her chance, she might before long be found with the Don, in Guadaloupe or La Guira. Capt. Atkins hearing that the man appointed to command the Leander was not fitted for the post, sent lieut. Dwyer of the British navy, to supercede him ; and our capt. has dropped into the capacity of mate. The lieut. soon grew impatient of him in this station ; for he had not been with us an hour before he discovered that the mate formerly capt. professed to be a seaman without any knowledge of seamanship—You know that true sailors are not very patient of those who they imagine intrude upon their calling. Dwyer soon availed himself of a circumstance by which he got rid of his mate. Having given orders according to custom in armed vessels, that the crew should be called to quarters at a particular hour ; the mate, at 4 o'clock, the appointed time, ordered the drum to beat for this purpose. Either from ignorance or contumacy, he had not first observed the punctilio of reporting the hour, and hearing the pleasure of the commander of the ship who was then

in the cabin. Dwyer on hearing the signal, asked the mate why he had ordered the drum to beat without notifying the hour to him? He replied he was calling the men to quarters; but after several interlocutions the commander took fire at the insolence of his mein or language, and made it a very serious business; called for his dirk and threatened to hew him down if he uttered another word. Col. A. entered into a warm discussion with Dwyer upon this exercise of power. The latter however, ordered the English ensign hoisted union downwards, as a signal for mutiny. An officer was sent from the *Seine* and the refractory mate conveyed on board. You may be sure we were not displeased to find impudence and ignorance deservedly punished.

*October 13th.* When will this intolerable voyage come to an end? How long before we shall have paid the forfeiture of our civism? Our ship is so much crowded, there is scarcely room on deck to manage the vessel. Our provisions consist of some bad flour, which is chiefly used for making a clammy preparation, from its shape called a pudding, which tasteless as it is, is swallowed with avidity, as it serves to fill the "aching void" of hungry



stomachs; add to this a small supply of refuse beef and damaged bread. Through the improvidence of our ci-devant captain, previous to sailing, the water is short and what we have bad; and the rum worse. In provisions and rum, the crew are allowanced six to four, that is, the quantity usually given to four is divided among six. Water is served out in less proportion. It is a common thing towards night to hear fifty persons complaining bitterly of thirst, and wishing in vain that they could get a full draught of water, at the price of any thing in their possession. This ship has never, since the early times of the expedition, abounded in conveniences, and by waste, wear and tear, the few it had are extremely reduced in number.

The sick and wounded that were removed on board from the hospitals at Aruba, a few days before our departure, are the greatest sufferers by our want of necessaries and our bad accommodation. We are particularly interested for two young men, in the height of violent fever; for whom we have no cordials, not scarcely medicines. One of them about nineteen years of age and very amiable, is a Mr. Burnett, who joined the enterprise at New

York ; and has always kept free from the low excesses and dissipations that have marked the conduct of too many of our company ; when the opportunities of indulgence were afforded. We had little hope of his recovery, but appearances are now more favourable.

A voyage at the best, is a severe trial of tempers. The monotony of the greatest part of the days, the want of incident and occupation, and the necessity of being always together, dispose passengers, who have no stated duty on board, to be tired of themselves and each other and to abound in spleen. In our circumstances, the common causes of uneasiness are aggravated by peculiar irritations. Hunger and thirst are no promoters of patience and good nature, even in philosophers and gentlemen ; still less in such an ignorant and undisciplined mob as we have to manage. Col. Armstrong who commands the land department, has enough to do to keep his people quiet. The great subject of contention and trouble is the eating and drinking ; he has issued several orders, making arrangements in this important business—owing to the smallness of our cabin, and the great number of officers on board, the latter are di-

vided into three messes, who take possession of the table in succession.

By this distribution, the company is better assorted than it would be, if the cabin were large enough to admit the whole to sit at the same time. But notwithstanding all the efforts of the quarter master general and his assistants, there is much discontent and confusion. Hardly a day passes that does not witness disputes and scoldings, which often terminate in arrests and confinements. The hungry dogs, who cannot help complaining, wear out the patience of their officer, of which he has indeed but a small stock ; and he gives them passionate reprimands, or sends them off deck under a shower, of what in any other case would be called abuse, with orders not to show themselves there again. Much precaution has been used against uncleanness and disease. The Indians, who are naturally inert and if they were not molested would be stretched on the deck for hours, basking in the sun, are soused over head and ears in a tub of water every day by way of stimulus and *lavement* under the eye and direction of our infantry adjutant. I do not know that any of the crawling tribe have strayed so far from home as to be found on the

dinner plate of the quarter master general ; like the temerarious little beast, whose impertinent visit awaked the wrath of George the 3d. so irreverently sung and celebrated by that wicked satirist Peter Pindar. But an apprehension of a similar or worse disaster, I presume has led this officer to proclaim war upon all the locks and curls of our non commissioned officers and privates. The order of the 3d inst. directed that their " hair " should be " cut uniformly short all round : i. e. so short that a comb will lay between the head and scissars," which has accordingly been done ; and every man's head resembles a scrubbing brush. It went much against the feelings of many of them to be shaved in this manner, as they valued their flowing hair ; but they could get no exemption from the indispensable regulation. Indeed the quarter master general thought it ~~of~~ <sup>advisable</sup> not to behead his redoubtables. Capder-  
 ns has just afforded us a supply of pre-  
 s, our exigencies obliging us to become p-  
 ners. Col. Smith has sent some refresh-  
 ments for the sick ; so that we have fewer wry  
 faces. The frigate Seine has had us in tow al-  
 most every hour since we left Aruba ; and as

she is a fast sailing ship, we have the hope of anchoring some where before long.

*Grenada, October 21st.* After a passage of twenty five days, we have reached this island; where we only stay to take in water and provisions, if the low credit of our general and his expedition do not prevent, and then sail for Trinidad.

*October 22d.* We have been more fortunate in getting supplies than we expected; though we could only procure enough to last us to Port of Spain, Trinidad. The Seine sailed early this morning for Barbadoes with general Miranda and most of his suite on board. Before they left the harbour our ship fired a salute in compliment to capt. Atkins for his kind <sup>and</sup> careful attention to us. Our salute was call<sup>d</sup> self<sup>y</sup> honoured by the Seine, lieut. Dwyer quitted the Leander the moment she cast anchor, declaring he was never Ind<sup>ed</sup> tired of a ship in his life; and no wonder, for his command was a perpetual vexation. During the passage he had several quarrels with the quarter-master general, who, he conceived, interfered with his duty. In these cases Dwyer treated this lordly personage with very little ceremony, and obliged him to suc-

**can**mb not only to his reasonable claims, but I **think** sometimes to his whims and caprices. **W**hen Dwyer was not employed in settling his own disputes with the col. he was defending some of the officers or men from his rudeness and violence. Mr. Armstrong's tyranny was enough in many instances to raise the indignation of the most indifferent by-stander. He obliged three officers, on very slight provocation, to remain upwards of two weeks of our last passage, on the ship's forcastle, denying them the liberty of walking on the quarter deck or entering the cabin. Probably a number more would have been put under the like sort of interdict had not the British lieut. used his ascendancy to prevent such an unauthorized and irregular use of power. As soon as this officer gave up his place, the mate mentioned before took the command under the patronage of his old friend A, and we are now at sea under convoy of his majesty's brig Grenada, affording the officers and crew of that vessel a perpetual source of diversion by the ridiculous manner in which this lubberly captain manages the ship.

Col. Kirkland, who has nearly recovered of his wounds, and captain Hancock are now at

St. Georges (Grenada) waiting for a passage in a neutral vessel to Barbadoes. The former as agent for Miranda, and by his express direction chartered the schooner **Trimmer** of the latter to accompany us in our expedition. Hancock called upon the general the day before yesterday to inquire whether he should be discharged and paid agreeable to the stipulations of the charter party. His excellency professed to know nothing about the business; and with a rudeness of which he is very capable, refused, both to the agent and owner either to discharge the vessel or pay the hire. This induced the parties concerned to follow him to Barbadoes, with a view to bring him to a settlement, lest (in his mind) some important object should call him suddenly to England, leaving them in the lurch.

It should appear that Miranda is convinced of the death of his schemes; and that he will be no longer assisted by admiral **Cochrane**. Captain Atkins is I presume instructed to take his charge to a place of safety and there leave him to himself.

## LETTER XXIV.

*Arrival at Trinidad.--Trimmer concern.--Reception of Miranda and his followers at Port of Spain.--Straits of the people.*

*Port of Spain, Trinidad, Oct. 29, 1806.*

LAUS DEO! my good friend, my feet are once more on land; we arrived here yesterday evening. On the passage we were in a constant state of apprehension lest some accident should befall the ship, from the ignorance of the man who had her in charge. His pertinacious patron now finds, and acknowledges his favourite is no sailor. We were several times in imminent danger of losing our masts; and nigh falling to leeward of our port. After a heavy squall, in which there was much mismanagement and confusion, the quarter master general in a fit of passion and distress (for he was alarmed lest the ship should upset) declared that he would "shoot the first man or officer, be he whom he might, that did not perform his duty with promptness and dispatch!" and that in future he "would carry a brace of charged pistols for that express pur-



pose." But notwithstanding all this, and his own admission of the inability of his favourite, he still continues him in office ; for *what* reason heaven and *himself* only know ; for I do not believe our blundering capt. is as yet let into the secret.

I, with several others have left the ship : and sincerely hope, never to put my foot on her decks again ; at least, I am resolved not to reside on board while she is in port, as many other officers are required to do. They are fools enough to submit to such an order, though the quarter master general, in the present state of our affairs, has no more real authority over them, than I have over the clouds,

Neither the Lily nor any of the vessels which accompanied us to the Main have arrived ; nor have they been heard of.

*Nov. 8th.* One of his Britannick majesty's mail boats arrived last evening from Barbadoes, on board of which, as passengers, were col. Kirkland and capt. Hancock, who mention that " Miranda may be expected to-morrow, as he left Carlisle bay in the English sloop of war Melville, the day before the mail boat." Their object in going to Barbadoes, as I mentioned in my last, was to effect a settlement of Hancock's

and for the services of the schooner Trimmer. They arrived at Bridgetown on the morning of Saturday, the 2d of November. The Seine, on board of which was the general, had anchored in the harbour the previous evening. Miranda's secretary had engaged lodgings on shore at the publick house which his excellency had occupied when at Barbadoes, in June last ; but hearing that Hancock had arrived, he altered his plan and sought shelter and protection in the admiral's ship, the Northumberland. The attorney general of the colony was consulted by the owner and the captain. He gave his opinion that the amount expressed in the charter party was recoverable against Miranda and the agent also, unless the latter could prove that he acted in the transaction by a delegated authority, which Miranda had denied ; intending by this artifice and evasion to elude payment. Every reasonable measure was attempted to bring about an adjustment. The agent requested Miranda's private secretary to interpose ; he declined, saying " that the general was already so much soured upon this and other affairs that he feared to address him on the subject." The joint owner with Hancock, Mr. R. T—— applied to admiral Cochrane, for liberty to send

a sheriff's officer on board to seize the body of Don Francisco. This being repugnant to the principles of hospitality, could not be granted by the admiral, while Miranda was a *guest* on board his ship. It appeared, however, that the laws of the colony would not permit the service of a writ on the body of any person not on shore. The sheriff was not vested, as in the city of London, with the *silver oar*, by the magick or real power of which he is enabled to seize the body of any person on ship board, or on the water. The agent wrote several letters to gen. M. urging the necessity of making terms with these creditors, that disgrace and mischief would follow neglect and inattention, that they had a right to civil treatment at least; but to be told, when their vessel had been four months in actual service, and obedient to every command of the general that 'he knew nothing of the capt. schooner or agent' was closing the door of amicable adjustment, and an extention of time for payment to which they had offered to assent. The owners finally proposed to trust for payment to Miranda's future success, in his views on the Spanish colonies, provided he would formally acknowledge the validity and amount of their demand.

**Miranda**, calculating on throwing all the responsibility on his agent, or expecting, as he said, to be secure from all legal process at **Trinidad**, whither he meant to repair, would hold no communication with any person upon the subject; but remained on board the admiral's ship till the evening previous to his departure, when he was removed to the **Melville** sloop of war, in which he is hourly expected at this port.\*

• The following affidavit and remarks relate to the statement in the text.

I, **JOHN HANCOCK**, of the island of Barbadoes, do solemnly swear upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that on, or about the 17th of June last, I contracted with **George W. Kirkland**, an officer in the expedition commanded by general **Fran : de Miranda**, and acting as agent in this business, for the said general, for the employment of a schooner, called the **Trimmer**, according to the terms and stipulations contained in the said contract. I further declare, that **Thomas Sandford**, said to be from the United States of North America, did apply to me for employment of the said schooner, at fifty dollars per day—that he did put arms, &c. on board the schooner **Trimmer**, for general **Miranda**, pursuant to a contract which he (general **Miranda**) made with the said **Sandford** and **Joseph Bush**, by his agent, **George W. Kirkland**, as I was then told, and have since learned to be a fact. Some time in the month

When Miranda arrived at Port of Spain the persons above mentioned proceeded to obtain justice by legal process. Hancock petitioned governor Hislop, who submitted his case to the judge of the colony, by whose consent

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of July last, at Trinidad, or as I now recollect and believe about the 20th, I called upon general Miranda to fulfil the latter part of the said contract (added under an N.B.) obliging him to give security for the employment of this schooner before her departure from Trinidad. The said general refused to give this security, saying, "that he did not agree to that part of the contract." I was also informed by his secretaries, Messrs. Fitzwilliam and Molini, that the general (Miranda) acknowledged, or had no objections to any other part of the body of the agreement; but that he would make no payment, nor give any security, before his arrival on the Spanish Main. I therefore dispensed with his giving the security; and was then receiving, and have been ever since receiving and obeying his (general Miranda's) orders, until the 21st of October through colonel Armstrong, his quarter master general, and other officers, receiving on board troops and arms, debarking the same, &c. Upon the arrival of general Miranda at Grenada, on the 21st of October, having left Aruba on the 26th of September, I waited on him, on board the frigate La Seine. I asked him "what I should do with my schooner Trimmer, and whether any arrangement for a settlement could be made." General Miranda replied, "I know nothing about your schooner Trimmer, Mr. Hancock. You may

process was ordered. A trial was had on the 20th of January, 1807. It appeared on this trial, by the affidavit of Mr. Thomas Sanford, that Miranda did in the most explicit manner authorize Kirkland to contract for the schooner.

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go where you please, and do what you please with your schooner. Have you any thing to shew and prove that I employed your schooner Trimmer?" I answered, "that I had not his (general Miranda's) obligation but that I had the hand writing of his agent, which was as good." Who is that agent? said general Miranda, "col. Kirkland," I replied. Then said general Miranda, "let col. Kirkland come forward and shew what authority he had to make such a contract. I know nothing about your schooner Trimmer, and have nothing to do with her." Some other conversation, to the same import passed between us, when I retired.

JOHN HANCOCK.

*Sworn to before me this 27th day of November, 1806.*

CHAS. S. MIDDLETON.

After the captain had met the repulse mentioned in the affidavit, the agent who sailed in the Leander, thought it necessary to pay his excellency a visit on board the Seine. His account of this interview is thus related. "Upon stating the object of my visit, Miranda observed, 'that he had talked enough about that business at Trigidad, and he wished to say no more about it.' I replied, 'we shall be obliged to talk more about it sir and come to a settlement; and as I am not wanted on board of the Leander, I wish for permission to go to Barbadoes, for the purpose of making

er in his behalf, and consequently that he was exonerated from any further responsibility. Sanford testified, that Miranda had applied to him to charter the schooner, that he requested and urged him to assist Kirkland, who was his

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such arrangements, as will exonerate me from a responsibility, under which, by mistake, it seems I am unfortunately holden. Do you wish sir, that I should be persecuted, embarrassed and distressed in consequence of an obligation incurred expressly for your benefit? Let me appeal to the honourable sentiments of your heart, whether it would be just that I should suffer for engagements contracted for your expedition and by your order? 'No' said Miranda, 'but if you will go to Barbadoes and attend to contracts and commercial affairs, you cannot attend to your military duty.' After some further conversation, in which the general evinced if possible, as little regard to the rules of urbanity and good breeding, as for the principles of common honesty, I obtained leave to go, in such vessel as I could find, and also permission to be accompanied by one or both of the officers who had been witnesses to the contract, with a view to have their testimony in proof of my agency. On returning I notified lieutenant B. of the general's permission. He went on shore prepared to accompany me; the next morning he received an order to return on board the Leander. Upon explanation with Armstrong, then acting as *chef d'Etat major*, I was told that soon after the permission above was given, he was instructed by Miranda not to suffer lieutenant B. nor any other per-

agent, in completing the contract, and that they were authorized to give sixty dollars per day, whereas it was engaged at fifty dollars. In the course of the trial Mr. Fitzwilliam testified, that, before Hancock sailed, he, as secretary of Miranda, assured him that his pay would depend on the success of the expedition. As Hancock proceeded with the charter party in his possession and a counterpart in the hands of the general, which stipulated that he should have fifty dollars per day without any condition annexed, or any intimation of such a connexion with the event of the enterprize, he alleged that his demand ought to be sustained. But the court paying more respect to the parole evidence of Fitzwilliam

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son to leave the *Leander* but myself. By this scandalous inhibition, he undoubtedly expected to deprive me of the evidence which would be necessary to prove that I had acted under his authority in this business. For the same reason I conclude that he told me I 'could not have a passage in the *Seine*,' thinking to delay or defeat my arrival at Barbadoes. But from what I have learned and experienced of this man, aside from the effrontery and baseness with which he has violated truth in denying my authorised agency in this affair, I am prepared to expect any degree of injustice, where he has a motive and can promise himself impunity."



than to the letter of the contract, and refusing to hear other testimony which Hancock's counsel wished to introduce, decided that the persons concerned must wait for the issue of further attempts on the Spanish Main, for payment.

*Trinidad, November, 26th, 1806.*

We have been here upwards of three weeks, and I believe are generally satisfied that nothing more will be done. The moment the *Leander* arrived, the officers and men who joined *Miranda* here left the ship and returned to their respective homes. Several officers and three or four sailors who were exceedingly ill of fever, lest they should infect the ship, were brought privately on shore. They were laid without beds or covering on the floor of a room, ill secured against the weather, in an obscure part of the town, and were destitute of every convenience and comfort except what the inhabitants gave in charity or some of their officers procured at their own responsibility. It was distressing indeed to be sick at this time, when on account of the disrepute of the expedition, few people thought the lives or comfort of *Mirandonians* worthy of much regard; and *Miranda* had neither money nor credit. A

**Mr. Joseph Robinson**, who joined the service at Barbadoes, fell a victim to the fever in ten days after his arrival, and also one of the sailors named Hayes. There was considerable difficulty in getting these men buried, for want of money to buy coffins. Hayes was thrown into the earth without one. After much delay and trouble, Robinson was interred in a coffin and in the usual manner, by means of a subscription raised among the officers; who indeed many of them could hardly keep themselves from being objects of the same posthumous kindness, which they had occasion to bestow.

Our reception and treatment in this island are naturally very different from what we experienced, when we were here before. At that time, notwithstanding the influence of a numerous French and Spanish party, opposed to our scheme, of course, the governor espoused it; knowing that it had received encouragement from higher authorities than himself. The government house was given to Miranda for his residence; and took the name of head quarters. The governor and officers, civil and military paid him the respect which corresponded to the rank he claimed. He re-

ceived many visits, and his design many good wishes and benedictions from merchants and others, though after some time, as we delayed long, there were signs of distrust ; and the popularity of our project was not sufficient to procure any considerable quantity of supplies or number of men without money. The means which were presented to Miranda, by the offer of merchants already mentioned, he thought proper to reject.

The tables are now changed. We are treated with infinite contempt as a *body* ; though many individuals, who in other circumstances, would be entitled to respect, have friends who spare them. It was with difficulty, when we first arrived, after our abandonment of the Spanish Main, that the officers could get lodgings on shore. We are suspected of plunder ; though the tattered appearance of many and the miserable looks of others ought in all reason to do away such a suspicion. We used to be distinguished by the sounding names of Columbians, Mirandonians—now we are called adventurers, merry andrews, &c. We are laughed at and scoffed by the very populace in the streets.

At about ten o'clock on the morning, of

The 9th the Melville sloop of war appeared in the offing. A report soon reached town that Miranda was on board. A committee, appointed by the merchants, assembled for that purpose, waited on governor Hislop, requesting him to prohibit Miranda's landing. His excellency, having listened to their representations, desired from them a written memorial, upon which he promised to ask the opinion of his council. Soon after the committee had retired, and previous to the sitting of the council, Miranda's chief d'Etat major, presented himself to the governor in favour of his master. General Hislop observed that he was very awkwardly situated; that the merchants in a body had called for his interference. "The commerce" said he "of the island is nearly destroyed—the articles of life, for which we are dependent on the Main, from the almost total suspension of intercourse, have increased in many instances from fifty to one hundred per cent. Even the Spanish launches have fled from the port this morning, with their money instead of goods, as they are liable to be punished with death by their own government, if they are known to have been here during Miranda's residence on the island;" he said "he had requested the merchants to

make a memorial, which he should present to the council, and should be guided by their decision."—Some further private conversation passed between them, when our general's solicitor retired. Miranda, however, stole a march upon the governor, memorialists and council.--While the latter were assembling, this hero of revolutions had landed with his suite, and to the surprise and probably vexation of those who were endeavoring to effect his exclusion, presented himself to the governor in the council chamber. It is said that Miranda had received some intimation of this business, which hastened his landing. It is also reported that the captain of the *Melville* had received intelligence of it, and therefore determined in conformity to his orders, to put him on shore, whatever might be his fate afterwards. These rumors are not improbable, as he was rowed to the shore, before the ship had come within six miles of the wharf.

The governor and council held their *séance*. The result of their deliberations was in substance ; that to interdict the temporary residence of Miranda on the island, would be repugnant to those principles of hospitality, which should possess the breast of every Englishman.

But they assured the memorialists, that no armament, naval or military, should be fitted out in that port, under the directions of Miranda, except in pursuance of positive orders from the Court of St. James.

The memorial mentioned above gives a detail of the injuries alleged to be sustained by the mercantile interests of this island since, to cite its own words, "the admission of Miranda, the wandering adventurer and his associates."\* It proclaims in pressing language the general scarcity of money, the total want of custom, the perishing of goods, the embargo of Spanish launches, and the increased and still increasing price of provisions ; which I am told, have risen 100 per cent on some articles and in a greater proportion on others, since the arrival of our general. If all this be true, they have great reason to complain ; and I have no doubt it is ; for the merchants, the French and Spanish in particular, are constantly sending away their

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\* The words *and his associates* were afterwards erased by the committee who drafted the memorial, out of respect to the feelings of some of Miranda's officers, whom it would have been unjust to blame for evils of which he was the cause.

money, or hoarding it up. The launches, which formerly supplied mules and cattle from the Main, have ceased to visit the island; and there appears to be an entire stagnation of business. All this is charged to Miranda, and to the island having been so long the seat of his operations. The Spanish launches, of which I have just spoken, are licensed boats, that trade between the Main and this island. Notwithstanding the war, both parties have so much interest in continuing their commercial intercourse, that it is permitted on certain terms. The Spaniards are in need of various articles of English merchandize, and the plantations of Trinidad cannot exist without regular supplies of mules to work their mills and fresh provisions for the inhabitants. These launches in July last were embargoed about three weeks at the request of Miranda, that they might not carry information of our preparations for landing in their country. This measure occasioned so much inconvenience and was so unpopular, that the governor was obliged to take it off several days before our departure. Its continuance was equally unnecessary and oppressive. It was first imposed to conceal the knowledge of Miranda's arrival

and preparations. But from the contiguity of this island to the Spanish Main, and the facility with which boats might row out of the harbour in the night, added to the inveteracy of many of the inhabitants against the expedition, the governor of Caraccas received intelligence of our being here on the 1st of July, when we had only anchored in the gulf on the 24th of June. When this embargo was raised, Miranda had the address to take to himself the merit of procuring, or encouraging the repeal. The masters and owners of these launches were assembled at the government house; Miranda endeavoured to inspire them with a belief that he interceded with the governor to release their boats, and that his views were so honourable, that he was willing his countrymen should know what he was doing.

By the request of the governor, our uniforms were immediately thrown aside, and those who could procure them have substituted citizen's apparel in their stead. Every military badge is kept out of view; and those, who could not obtain new garments, remained in their shirt sleeves until the capes and cuffs were altered, cut off, or concealed by some colour less offensive to Spanish loyalty, than the revolu-



tionary yellow and blue. Our general found an asylum from danger and fatigue, not indeed in the government house, as in more auspicious times, but under the roof of a lieutenant Briarly of the British navy. Here he continued some days, and then retired to a plantation belonging to admiral Cochrane twelve or fourteen miles from town, where he is now reposing at ease after the perplexities and cares of his abortive attempt at revolution.

The difficulty of burying our comrades is enough to shew you the scanty means or the avaricious disposition of Miranda. When asked for money for the relief of the sick or to bury the dead, he said he had none, and was indebted to his friends here for his subsistence. A reply of the same tenor has almost invariably been made from the first to all our applications for pay, accompanied sometimes with encouragement that it should be forth coming soon ; or that he expected to be in funds at this or that place. It was said that he had a considerable private fund ; but none of his people could expect to receive their wages out of this treasure, which, if he had, he probably kept as a resource in case of extreme exigency. But they might expect that he would spare a little to individual penu-

any and distress among the troops, or at least do his part in a subscription for the relief of those who had been crippled or broken down in his service.

Whether he had pecuniary resources or not, it has made little difference to us, since we have been left to live as we could—except twenty dollars, paid at Barbadoes to those who would accept it, and ten at Trinidad. Beyond this, we have always been obliged to support ourselves, saving, when on board ship, we received our proportion of the stores provided for the sailors and troops; and at Aruba we were not restricted in the use of wild goat flesh. The following narrative comes in place as affording a specimen of our situation and of the management of our leader.

In May and June last, at Grenada and Barbadoes, we were told that money would be had at Trinidad. When the troops were about embarking for the Main, after having remained several weeks at Trinidad, there was pressing occasion for this money, for the purpose of paying their debts. It was impossible for officers and others to be there without contracting a boarding and lodging bill, and it was difficult to appear decent and gentlemanly, with-

out employing tailors, shoemakers, barbers and washers, all of whom would of course present themselves to us on the eve of departure. Nothing could be more unacceptable than these visits and cards of creditors, to those who were destitute of the means of payment. It had been confidently expected that something would have been afforded by Miranda; at least enough to defray necessary expenses at this place. One ground for this expectation, besides the general encouragement which had been given, was the positive assurance of the deputy quarter master general Roorbach, who declared in the name of the general, that every member of the expedition should receive his arrearages. He also declared to the most important creditor, that his bill should be paid. The amount of what was done in compliance with those promises and pledges was an offer of Miranda to pay one third of a boarding account of about twelve hundred dollars—which an American resident had against a number of commissioned officers.

This gentleman had shewn himself a great friend to Miranda's enterprise, and to his followers in their necessities. The creditor of course refused to accept so small a part of his

demand, so long as no provision or even acknowledgement was made for the balance.

The officers, extremely chagrined at being thus situated, met and agreed to send in form a respectful letter to Miranda, stating their embarrassments ; and their former hopes of being enabled to answer their demands ; and requesting his excellency to assist them to discharge their debts, as it was impossible they could leave the island honorably whilst their accounts remained unpaid. This letter was handed to the general by an officer in behalf of the subscribers. His excellency gave a verbal answer in the following words ; “That if the officers could not quit the island without paying their debts, they must remain there ;—that they had no right to contract such obligations and expect him to discharge them ; and that he could easily dispense with those who could not accompany him on account of their debts.” Several officers signing the letter, not very well satisfied with his answer, took the liberty of waiting on his excellency at head quarters ; but they received no better treatment on personal application than had been obtained by letter. Upon the failure of all attempts to get pay, one of these officers, a

surgeon, proposed to resign his commission, as he would much rather stay in the island, than go away in debt.

In thus repelling the requests of his officers, M. seems to have forgotten that they were regularly on shore to execute duties in obedience to his orders; and he remembered to forget, that he had promised their expenses should be paid. The next day after the application, he offered to pay one third of their debts, as has been stated, observing "that by the Spanish laws which govern this island no soldier is obliged to pay more than that proportion, and that is enough." But though his excellency had the day before said he could dispense with those who were too scrupulous to accompany him, he did not choose to permit any examples of this scrupulosity, lest it might prove contagious. To settle their doubts and at the same time to secure their services, he hit upon the following expedient to compel all the officers who came with him to Port of Spain to leave it at the general embarkation. He procured the following letter to be sent from the governor to the officer who had requested permission to resign.

*Government House, July 23d, 1806.*

"Sir,—I am directed by his excellency the

**governor** to inform you, that as you came here with general Miranda, engaged with him on the service he meditates ; and as you, or any other individual have no permission to reside here ; it is his *positive order* that you immediately embark on board the vessel which brought you here. The officers of police have directions to enforce this order rigidly.

“ I am sir,

you most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) **THO. WALKER,**

*Act. Sec'ry.*”

You observe that the principle of this prohibition extended to *all* who came here with Miranda ; and if any other had proposed to resign, he would probably have been greeted with the same letter. As a proof of this, the provost marshall of the colony, was ordered by the governor to wait on the commandant of the N. A. infantry, and request him to see all his men and officers on board ship previous to our sailing. By this cunning expedient our chief saved himself from the necessity of helping his officers to pay their debts ; and at the same time put it out of their power to leave his service. It is not probable that many would have been

disposed to do so at that time, when it bore a promising appearance. Governor Hislop would not have troubled himself to issue such an order but at the instigation of Miranda ; nor then if the real design had been explained. It is certain the governor was made to believe, that the officers had been guilty of some misbehaviour. I am led to this opinion by the knowledge, that the laws of this island require every person to pay his debts, or give security for the same on leaving the place ; also from the consideration that on our return, though many are in a state of starvation, and American vessels are willing to take them away, no one is permitted to depart without conforming to this legal usage.

## LETTER XXV.

*Disposition of the British commanders.—Mission to England.—Process against Leander.—Dispersion of officers and men.—Fate of the prisoners.—Intercepted letters.—Intelligence from de Rouvray.—Characters.*

*Port of Spain, Trinidad, Nov. 30, 1806.*

IT is now well ascertained that the British commanders in the West Indies will give

no more aid to Miranda without advices and orders from government at home. What admiral Cochrane has done hitherto is said to have been passed over if not approved. His friends here were alarmed lest it should expose him to censure. But the purity of his intentions being unquestionable, it was probably considered that his general authority to molest and destroy the enemy of his Britannick majesty might justify the partial encouragement, which he gave to our design. Also, the sense of the British government was expressed at the time they had received news that we had obtained a footing on the Spanish Main and were expected to do great things. Since the chieftain has appeared a castle builder, without system or efficiency, without foresight or promptitude, the admiral is beyond a doubt heartily sick of being associated with his plans. He would be glad to forget the past and never hear the name of the revolutionist again. Very far will he be from any further engagements in this business. He thinks himself fortunate in not being saddled with the expense of it and made to fear for his command. He perhaps is sensible that he had occasion for his well earned credit with his government and his respect-



able name to screen him from unpleasant animadversions or proceedings of administration. One circumstance, amidst others, gave him just dissatisfaction and might have caused him trouble. When we left Trinidad, it was supposed we should not, in choosing the place for landing, pass the limits of his cruising ground. But Miranda for certain reasons shaped his course for Coro, which carried him into the limits of admiral Dacres' station. It was through the good understanding only that existed between these admirals, that this trespass of the squadron under the direction of our leader did not occasion difficulty and contest.

Miranda, calculating on the supposed principles of the present administration, or encouraged by specifick information, has dispatched an ambassador to the court of St James. Many are asking themselves whether it is advisable to cling to the wreck of the expedition till the result is known. It is hoped the minister will have as much success in recommending himself at this court, by good sense and dignity in serious negotiation as he has had by flattery and compliance at our head quarters. "Brutus is an honourable man"—He is neither more nor less than he told a lady he was at Coro, who on

quired if he was not formerly from St. Domingo—"I am madam, Gaston count de Rouvray!"

*February 24th.* I am near the end of my eventful story. Soon after the *Leander* arrived here the sailors went in a body to the house of the governor and represented to him that they were hungry and naked and wished his interference to enable them to obtain their wages. The ship had no stores and they no employment. They would be satisfied, they declared, if they could receive such a portion of their dues as would be sufficient to help them back to their own country. Upon being informed that they were *sailors* and not soldiers he assured them he would attend to their situation and see it redressed. They waited for some time and endeavoured to settle their accounts with Miranda, and the ship's agent. At length they applied again to the governor, who directed them to put their grievances into the form of a petition. A statement was made of their situation and signed by thirty three, the whole number that remained of two hundred and sixty shipped from America. The others had disappeared by capture, desertion, impressment, imprisonment and death. This petition expressed that they had been shipped aboard the *Leander* at

New-York, as seamen for a voyage to Jacmel or other ports in St. Domingo, and back; were taken with her from port to port and made to perform various services by sea and land, for which they considered she was answerable. By consent of the governor their petition was referred to the judge of admiralty, legal process was had and a libel issued according to law. By the management of Miranda, the course of justice was arrested and no provision made for the suffering men. He pretended to consider the measures for a process as highly improper. As however it was insisted that the men had a remedy in the ship, he stayed the process by declaring to the governor upon his honor, that he expected remittances by the next packet from England. This delusive pledge was repeated from month to month and answered the purpose of protracting or defeating a legal decision. In the mean time various arts and pretexts were employed to reduce the number of claimants to the ship. Some had obtained permission to go on shore for work. Their availing themselves of this permission was afterwards pretended by Miranda to be a forfeiture of their claim to wages. Thus if they remained on board, they run the hazard of starvation;

if on shore, even with permission, they were to be deprived of their interest in the ship. Groundless charges of insubordination were brought against others, who at the instance of Miranda were either confined, or pressed on board British ships of war. Those officers who interposed in behalf of these unfortunate men, and endeavoured to procure them justice, were represented as promoters of discontent and insubordination. Individuals of these officers, involved themselves in pecuniary straits, to save them from distress. The general was not content with his attempts to defeat their exertions for the relief of his own people, but endeavoured by false colouring; calling their justice and humanity disobedience and misrule, to produce misunderstanding, collision and embarrassment between those gentlemen and the government here. The general is in the habit of making every thing bend to his purposes. What was the life, health and property of these people weighed against his desire to save his ship as long as possible? During the time, he has been greeted with many and various applications from his followers, resulting from their wants and uncertain situation; some of them he has answered by com-

manding silence and acquiescence towards their general, others by dismissal from service as it is called. The letters\* in the notes will afford a specimen of these proceedings. The

•(COPY)

*Port of Spain, Nov. 16th, 1806.*

Your Excellency,

I hope will not look upon me as importunate when I return to request you will have the goodness to pay me from the date of my commission up to the present month. You promised when I was here before I should have my pay: I only received ten dollars. I am heartily sorry to be thus troublesome; being under the greatest obligation to strangers for my subsistence and am in want of clothes and other necessaries. I trust your excellency will do me this favor. I have the honor to remain

Your excellency's

very humble servant,

(Signed)

JOHN ORFORD,

*Licut. Engineers.*

To his excellency, general MIRANDA, }  
commander in chief Columbian Army. }

(COPY.)

*Port of Spain, Nov. 29th. 1806.*

Your Excellency,

My letter I wrote you dated the 19th inst. to my infinite regret and astonishment, not having as yet received any answer, I am again induced to trouble you; thinking

author of the letters accompanied Miranda from England and has cheerfully taken all the chances of his enterprise, not alienated by some instances of gross ill treatment. The officers for a time seemed to think it necessary to apply for leave to release themselves from their engagements, doubting whether they had served "two campaigns." The quarter master general, however, dispensed with this ceremo-

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it might, through hurry of business, have escaped your attention. My wants are now so many and so powerful that I am obliged, through necessity, to be thus importunate. How can any reasonable person expect that an officer who has been so long in your service without receiving pay and who has no resources at command, can possibly live, or make any appearance as a gentleman? I therefore request an immediate answer to this. Unless I get it, I shall apply to his excellency, governor Hislop, and state to him my case, requesting his assistance. I have now written you the sentiments of my mind in plain language that I might be fully understood and also that you may be enabled to draw your conclusion from it. I have the honour to be

Your excellency's

most ob't humble servant,

(Signed)

JOHN ORFORD,

*Lieut. Engineers.*

To his excellency general MIRANDA,  
commander in chief Columbian Army.

ny and departed in the Hawk sloop of war for Dominica, from thence to London. He absented himself without giving notice or obtaining leave, an abruptness, if not disobedience, which the general thought very improper.

This example, however, of an officer so near his person, induced us to believe; that we were no longer under any command, and might go our several ways without waiting for the formality of a proclamation of disbandment and dismissal. Miranda is somewhat *enragé* at the quarter master general, and calls it desertion. Some have taken the trouble to write a

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(COPY)

*Port of Spain, Dec. 2d. 1806.*

Sir,

By order of general Miranda I have to inform you that he received your's of the 29th ult. The purport of which he conceives to be highly improper and contrary to every military principle, that in duty to himself and for the good of the service, he thinks it proper that you should immediately be dismissed from it, and you are hereby dismissed from it and no longer to be considered as an officer under his command. I am, sir,

Your's,

(Signed)

WM. ARMSTRONG,

Mr. JOHN ORFORD.

quarter master general.

letter of resignation ; others have quitted in silence. Many of them were too poor to remain, and not rich enough to go away ; as the laws of the island beforementioned requiring security for debts due from persons intending to depart, were rigidly put in force.

Though report has frequently told us that some of our comrades captured in the schooners were executed, it was not authentically known except to Miranda, and a few confidential officers, till we returned to Barbadoes and Trinidad.\* It is now ascertained that ten

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\* The following are the letters mentioned in mine of September 21st, 1806, as having been intercepted by the Osprey sloop of war. They were forwarded to Miranda at Aruba. From the same source he learned the fate of our captured comrades ; but from motives of prudence concealed the intelligence from the troops at that time. As these letters show the state of the country when we landed at Coro, they are worthy of publication.

*First letter. August, 16, 1808.*

“ Miranda has made himself master of Coro, the garrison of which, consisting of two hundred fuzileers, retreated without opposing him. If the English support him, he will give us more trouble than is generally supposed. It is not that there is any want of numbers well affected to oppose him, but the country is entirely disarmed, and of what



of them were hanged and beheaded on the 24th of last July, and the remainder placed in different casemates and at laborious servitude in O-

use is inclination without arms, to which we may add the total want of money, for we have not a real in the treasury.

*Second letter.*

"It is now said that when the news of Miranda's expedition got to Spain and of his being at Jacquemel, orders were given to fit out four ships of the line at Cadiz to bring out troops for our defence; but I give no credit to this news. Spain in Europe is even worse than Spain in America, they have neither money, provisions nor soldiers, all is a labyrinth of miseries. We never see a vessel from home, no, not even a little one."

*Third letter.*

"The captain general with a numerous retinue of *custom house officers, priests, surgeons, barbers, apothecaries*, and all the armed force of every description marched on the 12th to form a camp at Valencia, or San Carlos, whence reinforcements can be sent to any place attacked. They carry with them above two thousand mules laden with provisions, ammunition and stores of every description requisite for an army in the field. Affliction, solitude, want of money, and every sort of misery reigns in this city. The army have left behind them their dearest connections—not a face is to be seen that is not the picture of extreme grief—fields without labourers—shops without workmen—parishes without money—and fathers without sons form a melancholy scene which is only interrupted by the lamenta-

maoa, Porto-Rico and Bocca Chica. I give you the names of the captives. Those without any place annexed were from the city and state of New-York.

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tions of the women, bewailing the fate of their friends and relations, whom they never expect to return."

*Fourth letter.*

"That damned fellow, Miranda, of whose peregrinations and detestable designs you give me a detail, will set us all mad, and leave us, by the expence he puts us to, without a six pence to bless us. He has positively arrived at La Vela de Coro and taken post, the garrison having retired at his approach without making any opposition.—We have a numerous population it is true, but the country has been long disarmed for political reasons. Indeed the truth is we can only confide in the Queen's regiment now reduced to one hundred and eighty men, which, with the invalid militia remains for the protection of the country and capital under the command of Pasquin Martinou. Such is the situation Miranda has placed us in.—God grant us a happy riddance of him."

*Fifth letter.*

"According to our general's account, he will have an army of nearly ten thousand. But this multitude being militia who have never seen a shot fired, will but occasion confusion and dismay. Even the regiment of Caraccas has not an officer of tried valour, they are a corps of muscadins who think of nothing but well cut clothes and fine feathers. This is not the Spanish infantry in the times of Carlos the first and Philip the second."

These are the names of those who were executed. Daniel Kemper, Francis Farquharson, Thomas Billopp, Charles Johnson, James Gardner, Miles L. Hall, John Ferris, Thomas Donahue, Philadelphia; Gustavus A. Burgudd, Poland; Paulo Theodore George, Portugal.

Those who follow were sentenced to ten years labor at Omoa. John Edsell, Henry Ingersoll, Massachusetts; John Hayes, Peter Naulty, Ireland; Daniel Mc Kay, do.; John M. Elliott, John T. O. Sullivan, David Heckle, John Moore, John H. Sherman, Benitt B. Neguss, Philadelphia; Thomas Gill, Robert Saunders, Jeremiah Powell.\*

These are destined for Porto Rico and sen-

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\* Major Powell has been released through the agency of his father, who visited the court of Spain, thence to England, being unable to obtain the object of his wishes. At London, he procured a letter from the celebrated and humane Dr. Jenner, which gained him access to the Spanish monarch, who immediately ordered his liberation. Messrs. Lippencott, Sherman, Smith and O. Sullivan have made their escape. Burk, Burlingham and Scott here died. The prisoners were not removed to their respective stations except those destined to Bocca Chica. The others are imprisoned at Carthagena, where Bocca Chica is situated.

tenced to hard labour for the same term of years. John Parsells, William W. Lippincott, supercargo, Philadelphia ; Joseph Bennett, James Grant, Mathew Buchaman, Stephen Burtis, Phineas Raymond, Connecticut ; Moses Smith, Alexander Bucchannan, David Winton, Frederic Riggus, John Burk, Edmund Burlingham, John Scott.

The others were sentenced to eight years labour at Bocca Chica. Pompey Grant, William Pride, Robert Rains, Benjamin Nicholson, Benjamin Davis, Samuel Price, Henry Serry, George Ferguson, Robert Stevenson, William Long, Joseph L. Heckle, Ellery King, Con. William Cartwright, Philad: William Burnsides, Ireland, Hugh Smith, Scotland, Daniel Newbury, Con. Samuel Towzer, Philad. James Hyatt, Philad. Abraham Head, Philad.

One seaman, named Spalding, was drowned at the boarding of the schooner by the guarda costas. Huddle, master of the Bee, was killed in the early part of the engagement. Mr. Daniel R. Durning fell a victim to his hard fate by sickness in confinement.

The issue upon the prosecution of the Leander is still protracted. The general has

had the address to persuade the governor and judge that the first advices from England would bring orders for furnishing him with means to discharge the demand. Several packets have arrived, but no confirmation of these assurances has appeared.\*

Letters have been received from the general's ambassador, Count de Rouvray, announcing his introduction to the British ministry, and what he considered a favorable reception. But all that was done for him, as might rationally have been expected, was comprised in good wishes and good manners. From the best information we could obtain they had no idea of extending their hands to lift the general and his associates from the dust.

Your curiosity may ask for some sketch of the persons and characters concerned in our en-

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\* The ship was finally sold, with her armament, in the early part of autumn, 1807, and probably for half the sum that she would have produced at the time the sailors made their first application. Partial payments were made to the few who adhered to the ship. What amount of the proceeds Miranda reserved to himself, or whether any payments were made to the Leander concern, or to the gentlemen who furnished arms and provisions at Barbadoes and ated. ad, I have not ascertained.

terprise. Many of them had seen military service before they were connected with Miranda. Armstrong, Roorbach and Kirkland were the principal persons in this class. The two former had been officers in the British army during the late war between Great Britain and the United States and are now half pay captains.

Armstrong had no inconsiderable military knowledge. He had method, industry and vigilance and it is to be presumed courage. He was well acquainted with the duties of his particular office, having served some time in the British army in that line. With less obsequiousness to his superiors and less superciliousness and tyranny in his treatment of those in his power, he would have been more serviceable to the enterprise and had more friends. Roorbach was educated at one of the universities and is a gentleman in his manners. The commencement of the American revolution found him in the practice of physick. He however thought proper to sheathe the lancet and draw the sword, and served in the English army without blemish till the peace when he married and settled in New York. He was an enthusiast for the cause in which we were engag-

ed. By his gentlemanly deportment and his amiable qualities he secured many friends and preserved a good understanding with all the officers.

Kirkland commanded a regiment in the state of New York as early as 1795. He was in the regular army of the United States in 1798 and was appointed inspector of brigade in general Hamilton's staff. He is known to have been remarked by military men of the first rank in the United States, for qualities and acquirements to make an officer of more than common merit. Our chief said "he had an understanding to plan and skill to execute." His humanity secured him the affections of his men, while his noted authority in command insured their prompt obedience. His deportment and address blended the air of the soldier with the ease of the gentleman. Upon the whole, I should say he was a cavalier worthy of a better cause and better fortunes than he has found in Miranda's adventure.

W. Steuben Smith, Miranda's aid de camp, is a young man of promise, and inherits the military spirit and generosity of his father. Had we succeeded, I am persuaded he would have done much honour to himself and his family.

Chevalier de Belhay had been in the English and Austrian service, and was held in much regard as an officer.

For the most part those gentlemen who joined Miranda at New York were of respectable families and some of them liberally educated. Hosack, Sands, Loudon, Burnett, Scofield and others are included in this class.

The sailors and troops with a few exceptions possessed a strength of nerve and hardihood of disposition suited to the perilous and doubtful nature of the enterprise.

Out of the number of the gentlemen who became our associates in the West Indies were a few of birth and respectability who had been in active and regular service either in the armies of England, France or Spain. Among the candidates for fortune and renown were several young men who would have shone, if they had enjoyed the opportunities of performing those exploits which it was then expected the nature of the expedition would afford.

It has been my study and desire, in the preceding communication, to relate truths which cannot be denied and are proper to be told. In a few days I hope to quit this island, for my native country; but the distance of my



port of destination from your residence, will deprive me of the pleasure of seeing you unless accident should bring us together. In due time after my arrival in the United States I shall transmit you my reflections upon this story, and such intelligence as I may receive.

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## LETTER XXVI.

*Result upon the means, conduct and object of the expedition.—An apology for its agents.*

*United States, July 1st, 1808.*

AFTER a long interval I proceed to wind up my correspondence. My disgust has made me willing to dismiss the subject from my thoughts. The general's envoy extraordinary returned last autumn from England after an unsuccessful embassy. Miranda sailed in the frigate Alexandria for London in December. His enthusiasm, after all the dampers it has received, was not extinguished. He said that he expected to be in Caraccas in the following summer.

I have detailed the progress and termi-

nation of Miranda's adventure. It remains only to make a result upon the object, the means and the conduct of the expedition ; the circumstances which determined its fate, and the estimate to be made of the actors in the tragical affair. I shall repeat and add a few facts, illustrating my observations.

The object was to make the province of Caraccas and in due time all Spanish America independent. Of this region it was remarked, " Nature scarcely ever did more for any country, man scarcely ever did less." Imagination saw fifteen millions of people, released from colonial dependence and the system of monopoly and restriction it involved ; enjoying a free government ; elevated from their depressed condition ; commanding the ample and inexhaustible resources derived from Providence ; made happy in themselves and connected with the civilized world by direct and extensive commerce. A splendid empire is founded. A new character is produced in the present inhabitants, and the means of their indefinite increase and greatness prepared. The trade of these fertile regions is no more " dragged through the store houses and magazines of the Havannah and Spain ; but finds new channels and

new customers. The flags of every nation are seen flying in the harbours. The vessels of the United States, instead of plying a smuggling and contraband trade, lade and unlade their cargoes in the face of day and under the eye of the government. The contest between plunder and subterfuge no longer exists. The dragon is forever put to sleep and the golden fruit of the Hesperides is within the reach of every visitant." Such it was thought and said might be the consequences of our enterprise. Then indeed should Miranda be another Washington, and we should mingle our glory with that of our Washington.

This regeneration of the new world must indeed be effected by resistance to established authorities and by revolution. But such was the imagined state of things, such the supposed agreement in the opinions and wishes of the natives that the resistance was not expected to be long or bloody ; and the revolution we were ready to believe would soon be over and give place to a well balanced government. To what extremities Miranda intended to go, if he had the power, in forcing his views upon the people is uncertain. From the event, it seems as though his purpose was merely to land on the

shores of Caraccas, to erect there the standard of liberty, and invite the inhabitants to enlist under his banners, and if they resorted to him, put arms into their hands for the defence of freedom. He would not in the proper sense conquer his fellow countrymen into liberty. If the people appeared favourable he was to strike; if not, to leave them to wear their chains. The morality of his object he always strenuously maintained. He professed to believe it approved by the principal statesmen and best patriots of this country. He would think Mr. Emmet's eloquent vindication of him and his design in the trial of colonel Smith nothing more than just. "Against general Miranda and the object of his expedition I have heard and read some malignant calumnies, which only could have originated with mean and mercenary beings, who never yet sacrificed a selfish feeling to a publick principle; whose hearts never sympathised with the sufferings of a slave; nor swelled with the mighty hope of delivering a nation. The district attorney, in his opening address to you, did not permit himself to adopt those calumnies in their entire extent—he is incapable of doing so, for his sentiments are liberal, and his manners mild. Sufficient

however, fell from him, to give to them somewhat of colour and countenance and to enlist your passions and prejudices against general Miranda and all concerned in his expedition. In particular, I remember he termed Miranda a fugitive on the face of the earth, and characterised the object of the expedition, as something 'audacious, novel and dangerous.' It has often struck me, gentlemen, as matter of curious observation, how speedily new nations, like new made nobility, and emperors, acquire the cant and jargon of their stations. Let me exemplify this observation, by remarking, that here within the United States, which scarcely thirty years ago were colonies engaged in a bloody struggle, for the purpose of shaking off their dependence on the parent state, the attempt to free a colony from the oppressive yoke of its mother country, is called 'audacious, novel and dangerous.' It is true, general Miranda's attempt is daring, and if you will, *audacious*—but wherefore is it novel and dangerous? Because he, a private individual, unaided by the publick succour of any state, attempts to liberate South America? Thrasybulus! expeller of the thirty tyrants! restorer of the Athenian freedom! wherefore are you

named with honour in the records of history ? Because, while a fugitive and an exile, you collected together a band of brave adventurers who confided in your integrity and talents—because, without the acknowledged assistance of any state or nation, with no commission but what you derived from patriotism, liberty and justice, you marched with your chosen friends, and overthrew the tyranny of Sparta, in the land that gave you birth.—Nor are Argos and Thebes censured for having afforded you refuge, countenance and protection. Nor is Ismenias, then at the head of the Theban government, accused of having departed from the duties of his station, because he obeyed the impulse of benevolence and compassion towards an oppressed people and gave the private assistance which he could not publicly avow.”

Whether human nature or the people of that country are so interested in the success of the project of emancipation as we republicans are apt to imagine seems to me to admit a question. I reflect that amidst all their alleged grievances, they have great wealth and prosperity; and whatever they suffer, they have in general no pain from the consciousness of op-

pression. If they were even in a worse state than they are, their listless character would make them little excitable by doctrines of liberty.

Having obtained the power to dictate the form of civil polity, Miranda proposed to use it with reference to republican theories. There must indeed in the outset be a dictator, who should see that the "commonwealth sustained no detriment." Their deliverer by right of services and of force is this dictator. He issues a decree for the election of a council of twelve persons, consisting of six whites, four free people of colour and two free blacks, which, with its president, is the supreme authority of South America, till further determined. At a proper time a constitution was to be submitted to the people, resembling in its general features that of the United States. The right of suffrage was to be confined to holders of land. The government being organized, many excellent things were to be done and all abuses corrected, as far as human wisdom could go. The church should have protection, but submit to be divested of its secular power. Regulations should be adopted to remedy inequality of property and vassalage. The evils of slavery were to be mitigated. The publick

**Burdens** were to be equalized. Our leader had many pleasing visions of good, which he hoped to realize in the new republick, which he should establish. Among the good deeds in his contemplation, was the munificent reward of his **Followers** according to their merit. There could be no want of treasures for this purpose in the Ophir he would possess.

“Be the end ever so much entitled to commendation. you ask where are the means? What powers and resources had Miranda corresponding to his design? In the first place he proceeded on the supposition of a spirit of revolt being ready to burst out in the country. The conspiracy of 1797, he imagined, had left seeds of discontent and insurrection, and a spirit of impatience and reform. He regarded the whole of that event as an indication of combustible materials existing among the people. He thought they felt the government like “an incubus oppressing all their efforts.” In these calculations I think he proceeded without book. He transferred his own feelings to others. His passions tinged the objects he contemplated with their own colour. What he wished or imagined he believed. For he never produced any sufficient evidence of his belief. He



asserted that he was possessed of letters and documents, some of them of early date and others later, inviting and encouraging his attempt. After he undertook to disclose particulars to his confidential officers—they expected a sight of these papers, but never saw them, and in consequence were shaken in their confidence in his veracity. The Don Pedro Minto story beyond question was a fiction, invented with a view to inspire his followers. It is known that his own brother, on receiving a letter from Miranda intimating his design, instead of endeavouring to secure him partizans, immediately disclosed its contents to the government of Caraccas. Miranda relied on being known in South America as a distinguished character and a native of the country. Very few persons however remembered him after a twenty year's absence. To a few he was known as a traveller and scholar, a French revolutionary general, and a knight errant of liberty. Knowledge of any kind and especially of the enemies of kings does not spread among the natives of South America. Political news papers and eccentric biographies are not there in circulation. What notoriety our chief had was confined to the place of his nativity,

At Coro he was a perfect stranger, and whether he was an Englishman, an Amorite or Egyptian they could not tell. His sort of reputation did not help him where it was understood. Those who knew him were not strangers to the suspicious circumstances, under which he was believed to have become an exile from his country. If any wished for independence, there is ground to think they would not seek Miranda as its founder. They doubted his principles and temper, and considered him chivalrick and extravagant. What could he expect from his little force, you will inquire. It was to serve as a rallying point for his adherents. Before he made the attempt from New York he had endeavoured to interest the British administration in his views. It is said they had at one time looked favourably upon the project of making Spanish America free, when the prospect of a war between Spain and the United States some years ago occasioned it to be a subject of discussion in the English cabinet. There was a correspondence between Miranda, Mr. Pitt and Sir Home Popham, and some progress made in arrangements to second the plans of our general. But it was broken off abruptly, because, as Miranda alleged,

Mr. Pitt had views of conquest not emancipation, and proposed that an English general should command the expedition.

Disappointed in this quarter, Miranda came to the United States. The political aspect of our relations with Spain favoured his design. With no other funds than eight hundred pounds, and bills to a limited amount, which might or might not be paid, he succeeded to procure the *Leander* and stores, valued at seventy thousand dollars to be subject to his directions. Of the persons on board, a part belonged to the ship as seamen, and the others were to serve him if they saw fit according to engagements to be made. This ship with the *Emperour* appears to have been all his dependence. No conditions were made with the English. The chief believed the military and naval establishment in the parts of South America which he proposed to visit to be small and inefficient. In this calculation he was not wholly mistaken, though he underrated it. To prevent the discouraging effect of his humble preparations on the minds of his associates, he relied on the "captivating deceptiousness" which he knew how to practise, and their faith in his pretensions and asseverations. He taught them that the revolution

was so organized beforehand, that their first employment in landing would be to sing *ios* of victory.

His second attempt was made with more considerable means. They would have been larger, had he been more circumspect and conciliatory. He was still without money. The number of men to act on shore you already know was very inconsiderable. The naval force indeed was enough to capture, hold and defend any station which their guns could reach, till his ability to gain reinforcements could be tested.

He was a dreamer, you think, to expect any success, when he was so weak handed. It may be questioned, however, whether his failure should not be ascribed more to his own mistakes and perversity than to his want of force.

I promised to remark on the *conduct* of this expedition. Miranda has been blamed for wasting so much time at St. Domingo. In justice to him it should be recollected, that captain Jacob Lewis had promised to join him with the ship *Emperour*. To obtain this additional force would have warranted even a longer delay at Jacquemel ; for the event proved that this ship was necessary in the

first attempt. But when disappointed in this expectation, we may ask with propriety why he proceeded with the *Leander* and two small schooners, after he must have known that all the evils resulting from delay were to be encountered, without a proportional force to meet the danger. Why did he not proceed to Trinidad for a reinforcement, which he always pretended he had a right to expect or could obtain from Great Britain? His impatience to commence operations, already sharpened by delay, had a powerful influence on his mind. A still stronger motive urged him on to immediate exertion, a hope that he should accomplish the object without the aid of the English government. For Miranda often declared that he "wished the enterprise to be considered an American affair." Even at Barbadoes and Trinidad, while he was hourly receiving the hospitality of British commanders, he intimated in plain terms, that he "must accept of the assistance of the British at that time, but he never intended they should obtain any power in his country." Thus leaping to his end without consulting his means, the catastrophe is anticipated; and we lose the two schooners with a large number of our best men, in the first act of the

drama. "Prudence," says one of the considerable actors in our affairs, "would have suggested the expediency of keeping our course after the discovery of the guarda costas, to which we gave chase on the morning of the 27th of April, instead of hauling our wind and standing off from the land. The bay of Occumara was not more than eight or ten leagues distant, and as we had been discovered by the Spanish vessels, any advantages to be calculated from a secret approach by night were lost. It should then have been the general's policy, as was suggested to him at the time, to have improved the day light; to have made immediately for the bay, searched out the anchoring ground, learned the situation and strength of the battery\* which defends the port, and to have taken possession of it if possible. He would then have learned whether the place was tenable and equal to the defence of ourselves, the ship and schooners, in case of an attack from the guarda costas. Above all we should have discovered our friends, if the cause had any advocates in the country, for it was but six leagues from this place to Valencia, where we were made to

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\* A battery mounting ten 8 and 12 pounders.

believe Don Pedro Minto was posted with an army and supplies at our service. Had we met with a formidable opposition in our endeavours to gain the battery, we should have known, that these expected friends were enemies, and might reasonably have calculated that an attempt to carry it by a *coup de main* at night would have been useless, as the position could not have been maintained. We might then have retreated in safety, before the Spanish vessels could have gained the harbour. All this might have been effected during the day. On the contrary we bore away at twelve o'clock; at six P. M. being from six to eight leagues from shore, an order was issued for every officer and soldier to be ready to land that night, notwithstanding this brig and schooner, which we had chased in the morning, had been observed to enter the harbour of Porto Cabello, and come out again, and were at three o'clock P. M. evidently making for us. One mistake at the commencement of a naval or military operation is followed by a train of evils. We now wanted the hours which had been wasted in the morning; the pilot mistakes the port; one schooner is sent to *reconnoitre*—from ignorance or inattention she neglects the signals

for recal; \* anchors in the morning under the land within long shot of the enemy, some of the people go on shore, she receives a shot from the Spanish brig, cuts cable and leaves them behind; no intelligence is obtained from the reconnoitering party; a battle ensues between the Leander and the guarda costas; the schooners, with the men and officers on board, first deceived and then deserted by their general, are captured. Deserted I say, because there was a time when the Spanish brig and schooner had separated, that the Leander should have endeavoured to engage the latter. But from facts and circumstances since disclosed, it appears† evident that Miranda would not permit the attempt." This discomfiture drives our hero to Barbadoes, where he ought to have gone before and in a better condition. He is well received by admiral Cochrane, is furnished with a small naval force with the promise of an addition at Trinidad, where he arrives on the 24th of June. Here his first step towards recruiting his little army, was the publication of a hand-

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\* See letter XI. p. 70. † See Letter XXI. p. 160.



bill\* without signature or date, so inflammatory and seditious in its language as to offend the government and people of Trinidad. The moon-eyed manner in which it was ushered into public notice excited suspicion ;—the style and diction, ridicule and disgust. The offers and promises it contained were the spurn of contempt. Such was Miranda's strange weakness as to make him believe that labouring men, receiving from one to two dollars per day, were to be philosophized into his "godlike design" by the offer of one quarter dollar per day, *free from all deductions* and a division of land according to rank after twelve months. But they were first to risk their lives in taking possession of this land, with the certainty of being made a head shorter if they should fall into the hands of the Spaniards during the contest. Nor was he to be convinced of the necessity of increasing this nominal amount of wages. Instead of advancing a small sum as bounty, a proposition was made, as ludicrous as it was futile, that each recruit should receive one bill for twenty-five dollars payable at a given time in Trinidad and another

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\* See Letter XVI. p. 102.

of the same amount payable in South America after it should have come into our possession. With all his knowledge and experience of armies, Miranda seemed not to know that ten dollars in hand, was better than fifty on paper (even if it were good) to any one of that description of men, who would enlist as soldiers. At length, however, he sailed with the force that has been mentioned. He makes his first attempt at Coro, at least one hundred and sixty leagues to leeward of the places he should have first chosen, viz. Margareta, Cumana, Carrupana, or Barcelona, either of which might have been taken and probably maintained by the force he had with less risk than Coro, and would in other respects have been more adapted to his views. Margareta should have been his place of rendezvous; abounding in cattle and vegetables, commanding every port on the coast; and being but eight leagues from the Spanish Main. Here he could have communicated with his friends, and, if he really had any in the country, they could have joined him. For we are to keep in mind that the commanding pivot of the expedition was a reliance on the good will and active exertions of the people. If he was to collect followers from the

islands, this situation would have been favourable to such a design. His correspondence with admiral Cochrane, Trinidad and Barbadoes, &c. would, from such a position, have been executed with safety and dispatch. But to beat up from Coro requires, in ordinary times, from fifteen to twenty and often thirty days. The injury resulting to us in this respect is exemplified in the fate of the British schooner Provost, the first advice boat sent from Coro to the admiral. She was captured off Guadaloupe, after a severe action of some hours with a French brig of superior force both in metal and men. It was not expected by admiral Cochrane that Miranda would go to leeward of Lagaira, and by most of his officers it was believed and hoped that Margareta was to have been the first port of destination. But though the capture of this island would have been considered as a gallant achievement, had it been effected with a force even superior to his; when the expediency if not necessity of possessing Margareta was suggested by able advisers, whilst we were anchored at Coche, the general replied, that "it was but an island; to take it would imply an acknowledgement that we were unable or

afraid to take a position on the main land." However just this opinion might have been, it should be recollected that Margarettta contains fourteen thousand inhabitants, and from its situation might be made a valuable acquisition to any government or country.

I say nothing of the disaster resulting from the unmilitary manner of entering the city of Coro, nor of Miranda's neglect to take strong measures while there, to gain his point. The sudden and inexplicable evacuation of La Vela de Coro brings up the series of blunders by which his expedition was to be destroyed. He should have remained there acting on the defensive and taking every measure to bring the people back to their homes and recommend himself to their favour. He would have been safe in that station, for the brigs and gun boats covered the town and commanded the principal avenues leading into it. The batteries were in his possession, and under these circumstances could not have been regained by any force which we had reason to expect.\*

Reinforcements from different quarters were to be looked for with much certainty. A very

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\* See intercepted letters, page 239.

respectable naval force did come from admiral Cochrane as was before mentioned, and recruits from the neighbouring islands, from the eclat of the thing, would have resorted to his standard, after it appeared that he had obtained a tolerably sure footing. The allegation of the want of provisions and water was not so founded as to make our departure necessary. The provisions which we had, without any use of the produce found in the place, did last more than thirty days after we arrived at Aruba; and on the day of the evacuation rain fell in sufficient quantities to supply the army of Xerxes with water for a year. The officers and soldiers re-embarked with reluctance. They did not think their dangers or privations present or anticipated so intolerable as to require an abandonment of the expedition. A very general indignation was manifested when the order was given for evacuation. An officer who was ordered to strike and bring away the columbian standard, in his vexation and disgust tore it to peices and threw his cap, epaulets and sword into the sea. He would not wear military insignia, which he felt were disgraced.

As a soldier of fortune, or the projector of revolution, this measure is inconsistent. But

his enemies ought to forgive him. Let them say, if they will, that he found the people averse to liberty and would not be the arbiter of the government they should have. After all their terrors, it proved he was a very harmless being to the inhabitants. He voluntarily left their country without laying his hands on their property, or their persons.

Another subject, as exhibiting a feature of Miranda's character, ought to be again mentioned, viz. the neglect to attempt rescuing the captives. Immediately on his return to Trinidad, after the first misfortune, he should have sent a flag of truce to the Spanish Main with conditions. He might have procured the co-operation of the English admiral for this purpose. But he insisted "it would be time enough" when he made them a second visit, "which would soon take place," and "that they would not be" injured: he was willing that they should take their chance. They were, as has been stated, captured on the 28th of April, and not sentenced until the 21st of July, so that, had he taken early measures, these unfortunate men might have been saved. Whilst on the Main, he might have made some of the people, whom he found, hostages for the safety, good treatment

and restoration of the prisoners not executed.

This history, with events coming in other ways before the publick, shows on what ground the *apology* for the adventurers stands. Interest in publick opinion and sympathy with those who are now paying the dreadful forfeiture of their error at Bocca Chica justify me in calling your attention to their plea, such as it is. I know that merit is determined very much by event; that the misfortunes of the imprudent excite more censure than tenderness.— With equitable and humane minds however, this will not be the case. If they view our agency in this calamitous business as entirely wrong, they will allow to those, who in other respects are correct, the benefit of the distinction between a single fault and a general contempt of right. They will do justice to all the considerations that afford a palliation or excuse. You have seen the trial and acquittal of Messrs. Smith and Ogden. The former had an agency in procuring men for Miranda. The latter supplied the ship, armament and outfit. The defendants could not obtain the testimony of the officers of government, which they contended was necessary. The jury, however, gave a verdict of acquittal. They determined that the persons accused had not broken any law of the United States,

however their conduct might stand, when judged by the laws of nations. Numbers of those who engaged went upon the general assurance that the enterprise was lawful and honourable, and not attended with any desperate risks, other than the usual fortune of war, if indeed the king's troops in South America would not submit without resistance. Those who had most insight into the business, looked for wealth and eclat, a share in a noble undertaking and the liberty of returning to their country when they saw fit. They might have thought that in case they were captured by the Spaniards, the American government might refuse its protection, though they hoped the contrary—but they did not expect to be arraigned as criminals at home. Before the preparations for the expedition began, Miranda went to the city of Washington. Arrived at the seat of government he is treated with courtesy. He writes thence to col. Smith\* several times in a strain

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• *Washington, Dec. 11th, 1805.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have received your letters of the 1st and 6th of this month, and your commodore's of the 5th : The business you and *him* mention is on the *Tapis* at this present moment, and will be concluded I hope in the course of



which creates the belief that his design is communicated to the government. Col. Smith's

this week. Not a moment is lost and the appearances look very favourable.—Have a little patience and you shall soon hear the result. I hope you will act on your side with as much activity, &c. &c. My best compliments to the worthy admiral and to major A. They both shall hear from me as soon as the thing is decided ; write me here at Stelle's hotel, and that will be sufficient, if the direction is *Mr. Molini*.

Yours,

M. A.

Col. W. Smith.

*Washington, Dec. 14th, 1805.*

DEAR FRIEND,

I saw yesterday for the second time, both the gentlemen, and after talking fully on the subject, I think I brought the business to a conclusion. Yet Mr. M. upon hearing my determination of quitting this city tomorrow for New York, appeared surprised, and persuaded me not to leave it before Tuesday next, the 17th, when he expected me to dine with him, and have a little more conversation I suppose. On consideration, I thought that a stay three days longer, might show calm and patience on my part, which would give to this step all the dignity I intended, though I am persuaded that no more will be obtained, than what is already imparted. Their tacit approbation and good wishes are evidently for us, and they do not see any difficulty that may prevent the citizens of the U. States in attending personally or sending supplies for this object, provided the publick laws should not be

going on the expedition is said to be a subject of conversation between Miranda and the secretary of state.—Some days before the sailing of the *Leander* he writes a letter to the president and Secretary.\*

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openly violated. Your demand of permission or leave of absence is considered impracticable, and Mr. M. thinks it easier to take the risk upon yourself at once ; however, we shall consider this subject with much reflection when we shall meet at New York. On the 18th, early, I shall certainly leave this for Philadelphia, from whence I will write to you again, and without much delay proceed to New York. In the mean time, I request you to have every thing ready for departure before the last of December, and I beg of you to show to our worthy commodore as much as is necessary of this letter, not thinking prudent in me at this moment and on so delicate a subject to write any more ; do the same with the major, and repeat to both my most sincere friendship and permanent esteem, When we meet, you and they shall hear more on this subject, in the mean time act with much caution and great activity.

Yours,

M——.

• *New York, January 22d, 1806.*

MR. PRESIDENT,

I have the honor to send you enclosed the natural and civil history of Chili, of which we conversed at Washington ; you will perhaps find more interesting facts and greater knowledge in this little volume than in those which have been before published on the same subject concern-

The result of his conferences as he represented was that the government would not co-operate ; but if he could make his design an

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ing this beautiful country. If ever the happy prediction which you have pronounced on the future destiny of our dear Columbia, is to be accomplished in our day, may providence grant that it may be under your auspices, and by the generous efforts of her own children. We shall then in some sort behold the arrival of that age the return of which the Roman bard invoked in favour of the human race

*The last great age foretold by sacred rhymes,  
Renews its finished course ; Saturnian times,  
Roll round again, and mighty years began,  
From this first orb, in radiant circles ran.*

With the highest consideration, and  
profound respect, I am, Mr.

President, your very

humble servant,

(Signed)

FRAN: DE MIRANDA.

To THOMAS JEFFERSON, President  
of the United States. }

(private.)

*New York, January 22d, 1806.*

SIR,

On the point of leaving the U. States allow me to address a few words to you to thank you for the attentions that you were pleased to show me during my stay at Washington. The important concerns, which I then had the honour to communicate to you, I doubt not will re-

object of individual enterprize, it "saw no difficulty that should prevent the citizens of the United States in attending personally, or sending supplies for his object; provided the publick laws were not openly violated."

The same impression was received from passages which were afterwards submitted to some of his agents from his port-folio, giving an account of conversations which he recorded as having taken place between him and the secretary of state at the city of Washington.

About the same time, the president had delivered a message to congress stating numerous and unprovoked acts of hostility suffered

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main a profound secret until the final result of that delicate affair; I have acted upon that supposition here, by conforming in everything to the intentions of government, which I hope to have apprehended and observed with exactness and discretion. The enclosed letter contains a book which I have promised to the president of the U States, and which I pray you to transmit to him. Have the goodness to present my respectful compliments to Mrs Madison, and to believe me with the highest consideration and esteem, sir,

Your very humble and  
obedient servant,

(Signed) **FRAN : DE MIRANDA.**

To the hon. **JAMES MADISON, Esq.**

from Spain ; declaring that the Spaniards had captured our citizens within our borders—had invaded our territory and committed depredation on our commerce, and suggesting the necessity of a recourse to measures of retaliation. Congress deliberated in secret, and it was thought on this subject. Under all these circumstances, the agents were led to conclude, that as the government knows and does not check the preparations for this expedition, it gives them an implied sanction. Those who adventure must be acting legally and safely. By reciting, I do not mean to vindicate the correctness of these inferences, nor accuse the administration of my country. Events have proved the insufficiency of the data to support such conclusions ; yet it must be acknowledged they were plausible and natural. It ought to have been recollected that Miranda's statements of his conversations at Washington rested on the evidence of his own assertions. Whether he was authorized to write the letters alluded to, does not appear by any direct proof. The copies of those to the president and secretary of state were to serve as documents for the eyes of his coadjutors. It might have been his art to use a strain of writing, which implied that

his correspondents, were privy to his transactions, and participated in his views. Their avowal of general good wishes for the object, and admission of the right of the citizens to use the liberty of action in consistency with the laws, he might have construed into approbation and encouragement of his specifick proceedings. On the supposition that the government were apprized of his intentions, an overt act only it is alleged could justify a legal process. On this delicate question, I should presume the government has not incurred any just imputation. At the same time, it will be recollected that the first promoters of this undertaking have been tried and pronounced "not guilty." Their vindication applies to all who espoused the design under like impressions.

Why did we continue, you ask, after suspecting or discovering the illusion? There was no practicable way of escape till our return to the West India islands, after the first attempt. It was then extremely difficult, among strangers and without resources to get away. Various methods were used to make us believe that we were still expected and desired by the friends of independence in that country. The partial co-operation of the British gave our en-

terprise respectability and seemed to insure safety if not success. The stake was great and alluring. More than all, we hoped to rescue our companions, who had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards. Obligations of honour and duty, an invincible sympathy with their forlorn and distressed situation impelled us to embrace the opportunity, which seemed to offer of trying to procure their release. In this favourite hope, we were disappointed. Is there no resource for these unfortunate people? Are there no individuals, is there no government able and willing to lift up a voice, or stretch out an arm in their favour? May not the new order of things, operate for their benefit? Cannot the government of Caraccas be persuaded it would be worthy of their magnanimity to let the remaining victims of delusion go?

That all the persons concerned in this calamitous business consider it with regret is certain. They are not again to be led away by the same lure. They are sufficiently cured of a disposition to reform the world and create republicks.

Having given some sketch of the life of Miranda, and a short description of the country which was to have been the theatre of his exploits, I shall have done.

## LETTER XXVII.

*NOTICES OF MIRANDA.**United States, August 10, 1808.*

**GENERAL MIRANDA** in conversation was reserved on the subject of his own life. He wrapped himself in mystery ; and apparently enjoyed a sort of satisfaction, in leaving people to conjecture and wonder. He would talk of what he had seen and done ; of his studies his adventures and sufferings ; his perils and escapes. But he avoided detail and circumstance ; time, place and persons he kept out of view. In his relations he stopped at generalities. For this reason, his officers know less of him than you would imagine. Of the place of his nativity there are several and disagreeing accounts. But beyond doubt he was born in the city of Caraccas, in the province of that name. It is taken for granted that he is descended from one of the oldest Spanish families. Some accounts represent that his grandfather was governor of a province and his father a candidate for the same place ; but defeated in his expectations, through the jealousy



which the court have ever entertained of the natives. This disappointment is mentioned, with what truth, I cannot say, as a cause of our hero's discontent with the government. If such an event ever occurred, it probably had a large share of influence on a mind like that of Miranda. But the ardor of his feelings, the boldness of his speculations and the republican bias of thinking which he always manifested afford sufficient solutions. He was educated like other young men of the better families in Caraccas, at the schools and university of that city. He never mentioned his teachers nor his school. He said that he learned Greek after he was forty. Depons observes, that at present the Spanish youth, sensible of the insufficiency of their education, apply with avidity to the reading of foreign books. It is said Miranda began his travels in the provinces, in early manhood. He entered the army and was captain in the regular troops of Spain. Biographers say he rose to be colonel; but this is doubtful. One of his stations was at Guatemala. Here he improved his opportunities of becoming acquainted with New Spain.

He left his native country from necessity, to avoid the displeasure of government. The

causes of his precipitate disappearance are variously stated. It is ascribed to his expressing obnoxious sentiments relating to the independence of the colonies and having laid a plot for effecting it. One of the most celebrated French generals told me, that whilst Miranda was stationed at the Havanna, being in the engineer corps, he was commissioned by the military commander to go to Jamaica for the purpose of surveying the fortifications, and making out a report of their strength and condition. To disguise his character and design, he was allowed to smuggle ten thousand dollars value of commodities. On his return, he was charged with exceeding the limits of his permission. His property was seized. The cause was carried to Madrid, where it was decided against him. He thought it wise to decamp, in order to avoid the penalties which he had incurred.

In 1783 he visited the United States. I have conversed with many persons who knew him at this time. They say his mind was full of the ideas of reform and innovation, of liberty and philosophy. He went from this country to Europe. London was his most constant place of residence, whilst he was not on his travels. He visited almost every portion of

the European world ; every principal city and court ; and went to Constantinople. He had a superb library in London. This literary treasure was pledged for a part of the necessary funds to defray his expenses. In the negotiations and disputes and naval preparations respecting Nootka sound, he had an agency under the English ministry. When the French revolution commenced he was in Russia. This event opened a career suited to his genius. He repaired immediately to Paris ; and soon obtained favour, fortune and place, under the protection of Pethion. He was employed in the French army. In 1792 he was sent in quality of a general officer to Champagne, under Dumourier ; whom he afterwards accompanied to Belgium ; and he was nominated in September commandant of the army of Flanders in the room of Labourdonnaye ; during the winter he had the chief command in the absence of Dumourier.

In the spring of 1793 Miranda besieged Maastricht, by order of the executive council ; but general Lanoue, who was posted at Rôer, being beaten at Aldenhoven, he was obliged to raise the siege after twenty days bombardment. The defeat at Aldenhoven and the bad success

at Meastricht overturned all Dumourier's plans.

How far Miranda was to blame let military men judge.

The commander in chief, Dumourier, having retired from Holland, again appeared at the head of the Belgic army. Miranda commanded the left wing on the 13th of March in the affair of Nerwinde. This battle would probably have terminated in favour of the French, had not Miranda retired from the field, soon after the middle of the day. One of his columns was panick struck, and the other two were driven back. This retreat has been ascribed in some French publications to the treachery and cowardice of our hero. A celebrated French general, now in this country, is of a different opinion. He declares it was by a military fault of Miranda's that the French lost the victory at Nerwinde; "Miranda," says he, "is not justly chargeable with treachery or cowardice." Dumourier, says, "that either disconcerted, or willing to sacrifice his rival, Valence, he ordered his troops to retreat." He sent no advice of his retreat to Dumourier, which neglect exposed the right wing and centre of the army to the whole weight of the enemy.

It seems that Miranda, was no friend to Dumourier. Three days after the battle, it has been asserted, he wrote a letter to Pethion against this general. Miranda's partizans say this letter afforded him no justification. He afterwards published a memorial, in which he tells his protector, Pethion, that the expedition against Holland had been undertaken contrary to his advice; that he had foreseen the mischiefs which would result from such a project; and that Dumourier, in concert with Thouvenot, had decided upon every thing without consulting him. As to the defeat at Nerwinde, he endeavoured to confirm the opinion then circulated, that it was owing to the treachery of the commander in chief and his adherents. At the same time he continued to correspond with Dumourier. Miranda did not save himself by this double faced precaution. He was arrested at the moment of the desertion of that general and was sent to Paris for trial. The revolutionary tribunal acquitted him in May. Before the end of the same month he was again arrested. He appeared in person at the bar of the convention, to justify himself, but he did not obtain his liberty until the fall of the mountain.

In October, 1795, he attempted to recover

his lost influence by serving the convention against the sections. This expedition did not succeed. On the 22d of the same month his arrestation was decreed. He was sentenced to be transported beyond the limits of France. In vain he endeavoured to effect a retraction of his sentence. He was delivered to a body of *gens des armes* who were charged to conduct him to the frontiers. He got away from his escort and wrote to the directory, demanding a reversion of his sentence. This business was kept in train a long time, although the director Dettouneur was his particular enemy. Finally, the 4th of September, 1797, finished his residence in France. He was included in the grand deportation. England afforded him refuge. He was among the number whom Bonaparte did not recal in 1799. After this period he continued in London. Failing in various attempts to interest the British ministry in his project respecting South America, he embarked for New York, under the assumed name of George Martin of New-Orleans. On the 2d of September he sailed from England and arrived in the United States on the 12th of November following. Here he commenced operations for carrying into effect his project of twenty

It secontemplation, to revolutionize his na-  
mour country. A mercantile house in New  
asork furnished him with the ship and arma-  
tment, as has been described in this history.

He gave Mr. Ogden three bills, one of five  
thousand, one of two thousand and one of eight  
hundred pounds sterling. The two last only  
were duly paid. The property taken by him  
from New York was all spent, dissipated, or  
remains in his hands. No part of the proceeds  
of the sale of the Leander was ever repaid to  
the original owners.

Dumourier says of this personage "that he  
was a man of capacity and extensive informa-  
tion. He was better versed in the theory of  
war than any other of the French generals; but  
he was not equally versed in the practice."  
He had been of great service to him in the  
different attacks on the Prussians. But "he  
had a haughtiness of disposition and bluntness  
of manner, which begat him many enemies;  
and he was unfit to command the French,  
the ene confidence it is impossible to gain, but  
ed. Hd humour, and conduct expressive of  
conventionr them."

obtain his licceding history, Miranda's injudi-

In October, of his place of landing is men-

ned as one cause of his failure. The rea-  
 sons in favour of his choice were not staed.  
 The principal inducement probably was, that  
 information or rumour he imagined he  
 had in Coro. In stating his grounds  
 affecting success, I might have placed  
 a summary form by reciting four posi-  
 tions laid down by one of his advocates at the  
 outset.

First, From the boundless extent of the  
 coast of Spanish America, he can choose his  
 point of landing.

Second, From the same circumstance, the  
 whole military force, that is to say, the milita-  
 ry force from the mother country, is distribut-  
 ed into small detachments, and these detach-  
 ments are most remote from each other. In  
 no single post in America can there be more  
 than one thousand men.

Third, The militia of the country are inva-  
 riably in his cause.

Fourth, If he could therefore, raise a suffi-  
 cient force to withstand the attack of two or  
 three of these detachments, for more could ne-  
 ver join, he would be enabled to maintain his  
 ground ; and revolutionizing as he went, add  
 his conquests to his force.



From this narrative in connexion with the prior history of general Miranda, you will receive an impression of his character not so favourable, as that entertained by many persons. I have related facts. They must be allowed to speak for themselves. His imagination and feelings were an overmatch for his judgment. He is more rash and presumptuous in projects, than dexterous in extracting himself from difficulties. In religion he is reputed skeptical; but in our hearing he never derided subjects of this nature. He used formerly to talk infidelity to the offence of the serious; experience has taught him caution, or he has changed his sentiments. It is said upon good authority that he partook the sacrament at Coro. He is too much of an enthusiast in his favourite objects to allow his means to be enfeebled by moral scruples. I am willing to believe he has as much conscience as the impetuous passions of such men generally admit.

I make a few remarks on his person, manners and petty habits.

He is about five feet ten inches high. His limbs are well proportioned; his whole frame is stout and active. His complexion is dark, florid and healthy. His eyes are hazel colour.

ed, but not of the darkest hue. They are peircing, quick and intelligent, expressing more of the severe than the mild feelings. He has good teeth, which he takes much care to keep clean. His nose is large and handsome, rather of the English than Roman cast. His chest is square and prominent. His hair is grey and he wears it tied long behind with powder. He has strong grey whiskers growing on the outer edges of his ears, as large as most Spaniards have on their cheeks. In the contour of his visage you plainly perceive an expression of pertinaciousness and suspicion. Upon the whole without saying he is an elegant, we may pronounce him a handsome man. He has a constant habit of picking his teeth. When sitting he is never perfectly still; his foot or hand must be moving to keep time with his mind which is always in exercise. He always sleeps a few moments after dinner, and then walks till bed time, which with him is about midnight. He is an eminent example of temperance. A scanty or bad meal is never regarded by him as a subject of complaint. He uses no ardent spirits; seldom any wine. Sweetened water is his common beverage. Sweetness and warmth, says he, are the two

greatest physical goods; and ~~acid and cold~~ are the greatest physical evils in the universe.

He is a courtier and gentleman in his manners. Dignity and grace preside in his movements. Unless when angry, he has a great command of his feelings; and can assume what looks and tones he pleases. In general his demeanour is marked by hauteur and distance. When he is angry he loses discretion. He is impatient of contradiction. In discourse he is logical in the arrangement of his thoughts. He appears conversant on all subjects. His iron memory prevents his ever being at a loss for names, dates and authorities.

He used his mental resources and colloquial powers with great address to recommend himself to his followers. He assumed the manners of a father and instructor to the young men. He spoke of the prospect of success, and of the preparations made for him with great confidence. The glory and advantages of the enterprise were described in glowing colours. At another time he detailed his travels, his sufferings and escapes in a manner to interest both their admiration and sympathy. He appeared the master of languages, of science and literature. In his conversations he carried his

hearers to the scenes of great actions and introduced them to the distinguished characters of every age. He took excursions to Troy, Babylon, Jerusalem, Rome, Athens and Syracuse. Men famed as statesmen, heroes, patriots, conquerors and tyrants, priests and scholars he produced, and weighed their merits and defects. Modern history and biography afforded him abundant topics. He impressed an opinion of his comprehensive views, his inexhaustible fund of learning; his probity, his generosity and patriotism. After all, this man of renown, I fear, must be considered as having more learning than wisdom; more theoretical knowledge than practical talent; too sanguine, and too opinionated to distinguish between the vigour of enterprise and the hardness of insatiation.

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## LETTER XXVIII.

*Geographical and statistical notices of Caraccas.*

*United States, August 21st, 1808.*

ACCORDING to received geographical accounts, the Spanish dominions in North America extend from latitude thirty nine degrees

thirty minutes to seven degrees thirty minutes north, a length of one thousand nine hundred and twenty geographical miles. The medial breadth is computed at four hundred of the same miles. In South America they reach from the Caribbean sea to the most southern promontory. They are divided into viceroalties, audiences, provinces, governments, departments and missions. Spain has under her sceptre in Mexico and South America fourteen or fifteen millions of people.

I shall give a sketch of the captain generalship of Caraccas, that part on which Miranda made his attempt. Depons' voyage to the eastern part of Terra Firma or the Spanish Main, in South America comprises an ample description of this region; and is the principal authority for the following notices.

This territory is situated between the twelfth degree of north latitude and the equinoctial. It comprehends

Venezuela, containing	500,000 inhabitants
Maracaibo,	100,000
Cumana,	80,000
Spanish Guiana,	34,000
Isle of Margareta,	14,000
	<hr/> 728,000

Of the population, two tenths are whites, three, slaves, four, freedmen and their descendants, and the remainder indians. There is scarcely any emigration from Spain to Terra Firma. A great proportion of the whites receive a liberal education, such as it is, in the seminaries of the country and college and university of Caraccas. "Every one is ambitious," says Dr. Sans, as quoted by Depons, 'of becoming a lawyer, a priest or a monk. Those whose pretensions are not so great wish to be notaries, scriveners or clerks.'" A military rank is an object of rivalry. A sword is their dear companion. Decency, in their opinion, debarb them from agricultural pursuits and enjoins them to treat the mechanical arts with sovereign contempt. They are charged with an extravagant passion for distinction. But the French traveller thinks that a happy revolution of opinion in these respects is on the eve of being accomplished, and every thing announces that the succeeding generation will exhibit a spectacle of a moral amelioration, achieved by the increased energy of the national wisdom, in consequence of the admission of whatever is useful in the principles of other nations.

The Spaniards and creoles of Caraccas are

mild, affable, polite and from prudence timid. Slaves can be freed, by paying the price they cost their masters. Freedmen are known by the name of people of colour. They exercise various trades, but are not fond of personal labour. They are formed into corps of militia. Merit may raise a man of colour to the rank of captain.

The laws respecting the indians are mild. But the indians are not good citizens. They are indolent and intemperate.

The government of Caraccas, like that of other parts of Spanish America is so constituted as to keep it dependent on the parent country. The governor or captain general represents the Monarch and commands the military force. There are delegated governors, who have each an assessor. The Royal Audience of Caraccas consists of a president, who is the captain general, a regent, three judges, two fiscals; one for criminal affairs, the other for the finances, with a reporter and other necessary officers. It administers justice, regulates the finances, and has other great prerogatives.

The naval force of Terra Firma is trifling and could not resist a single frigate. Several seaports have fortresses. Maracaibo has twenty

five thousand inhabitants, is defended by three forts and four companies of troops of the line, and a proportion of militia. The haven or port of Coro, called La vela de Coro, sixteen leagues east of Maracaibo had at the time of our debarkation two batteries with fifteen or eighteen peices of cannon of various calibers from six to eighteen pounders. Porto Cabello or Cavello, fifty eight leagues to the east of Coro, has a strong fort with a large and numerous artillery. In time of war it is supplied with two companies of regular troops. In case of attack, says Depons, three thousand militia might be collected here in eight days. La Guira, the haven of Caraccas twenty five leagues to the east of Porto Cabello, is very strongly fortified. Cumana one hundred leagues east of La Guira is of difficult access, has a fort and might present a force of five thousand men. The island of Margaretta four leagues north of Cumana has trifling batteries, one company of regular troops, one of artillery and several of militia. Thus it appears the strong places are distant from each other sixty or one hundred leagues. Hence it is observed a debarkation on the coast might easily be effected in various places, and the troops proceed into the country,



whilst the ships, by attacking the forts, would distract the military operations.

The military force as stated by Depons is a regiment of regular troops of nine hundred and eighteen men, distributed at Caracas, La Guira and Porto Cavello. Four hundred troops of the line are at Maracaibo, at Cumana one hundred and fifty, at Guiana one hundred and fifty, and at Varinas seventy seven. The artillery at the respective places is served by separate companies, besides militia. The whole armed force of the captain generalcy, regular troops and militia is stated at thirteen thousand and fifty nine.

There is no religion but the Roman Catholic. To be suspected of heresy is dangerous; to be convicted fatal. The tribunals of the inquisition are erected at Mexico, Lima and Cartagena, and are very powerful. They prohibit bad books to the number of five thousand four hundred and twenty. Spanish America abounds in priests, who are held in great respect. The missionaries are numerous. The churches are decent and often elegant, and are still asylums for criminals. The tithes are paid one tenth part to the king, one fourth to the bishop, one fourth to the chapter and n.

remainder to the parish priests and to other pious uses. The income of the bishop of Caracas is forty thousand dollars.

The productions of this region are cocoa, coffee, sugar, indigo and tobacco. Besides the present products, says Depons, there is a great variety of others which the soil offers to the inhabitants, without requiring any advance or subjecting them to any trouble but that of collecting and bestowing on them a light and easy preparation. Among these he mentions, vanilla, wild cochineal, dying woods and barks, gums, rosin and medical oils, herbs, roots and bark for medicine. From this country half Europe might be supplied with wood for its luxurious furniture and equipage. Commerce might draw much from the animal kingdom. The neat cattle are calculated at one million two hundred thousand, horses and mares one hundred and eighty thousand, mules ninety thousand. Sheep are innumerable and deer abundant. Notwithstanding this abundance, agriculture is at a low ebb in this country. La Guira, Porto Cabello, Maracaibo, Cumana, Barcelona, and Margaretta have a right to trade with the mother country. In 1796 the imports from Spain to Caraccas were estimated at three

million one hundred and eighteen thousand eight hundred and eleven and one half dollars, and the exports at two million eighty three thousand three hundred and sixteen dollars. There is a limited trade to the other colonies which brings about four hundred thousand dollars into the country. It exports to foreign West India islands articles of its own produce, except cocoa, in neutral bottoms; part of the returns must be in negroes or in farming or household utensils and the remainder in specie. But this remainder is principally smuggled in manufactured goods. The contraband trade divided chiefly between Jamaica, Curacao and Trinidad is estimated at seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually before the war of 1796. It has increased greatly since that period. The whole regular exports of Caraccas from 1793 to 1796 are stated at twelve million two hundred and fifty two thousand four hundred and fifteen dollars, from 1797 to 1800, six million four hundred and forty two thousand three hundred and eighteen. The finances of Caraccas are under the direction of an intendant. Still revenue arises principally from the cus- paid a duty of five per cent. on sales from the bishop, one re. and tithes, and from the pro-

duce of the cruzada and of the sale of tobacco. The two last are destined for the treasury at home. There is usually a deficit, even in time of peace; in 1797 the receipt was one million one hundred and forty thousand seven hundred and eighty eight dollars, expenditure, one million eight hundred and eighty six thousand three hundred and sixty three. The population of some of the chief cities is thus stated. Caraccas forty thousand, La Guira six thousand, Porto Cavello seven thousand six hundred, Coro ten thousand. The harbour, or La Vela de Coro, as it is commonly called, and its environs are supposed to contain not less than two thousand.

In 1797 three state prisoners were sent from Spain to Caraccas, on account of their revolutionary propensities. Being treated with great indulgence by the officers and soldiers to whose care they were committed, they formed the project of a conspiracy against the government. They engaged a number of persons, some of them of consequence in their party. After gaining their first converts, the spirit did not spread. The coldness and apathy of the people did not admit of the effervescence they desired. After the plot had been kept a secret

for many months it was disclosed to the government. Some of the ringleaders escaped and others were taken. It was found that seventy two had entered into the conspiracy ; six were executed. The rest either escaped or were sent to the galleys or banished from the country.



# ERRATA.

Page 47, 7th line from bottom for "consist" read *consisted*.

48, In list of appointments for "Judale" read *Judak*.

103, 6th line from bottom for "equadron" read *escadron*.

do. 2d do. do. for "De Sine" read *Dessen*.

109, 9th do. do. for "August 1st" read *August 14th*.

152, 8th do. from top for "Dion Pelopidas" read *Dion and Pelopidas*.

157, 4th do. do. for "provide" read *provided*.

179, 10th do. do. in ferrons dele r.—11th do. for *de* read *de*, for *cet* read *ce*.—12th do. for *un* read *une*, for *il a nous* read *il nous a*.

235, 22d do. do. for "was" read *were*.

246, 15th do. do. in some copies, for "noted," read *dignified*.

268, 11th do. do. for "intolrable" read *intolérable*.

282, Read *Labourdonnaye* and *Maestricht*.

285, 9th line from top read *gens d'armes*.—12th do. for "Detoureur" read *Le Tourneur*.

287, 2d do. do. for "staed" read *stated*.













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